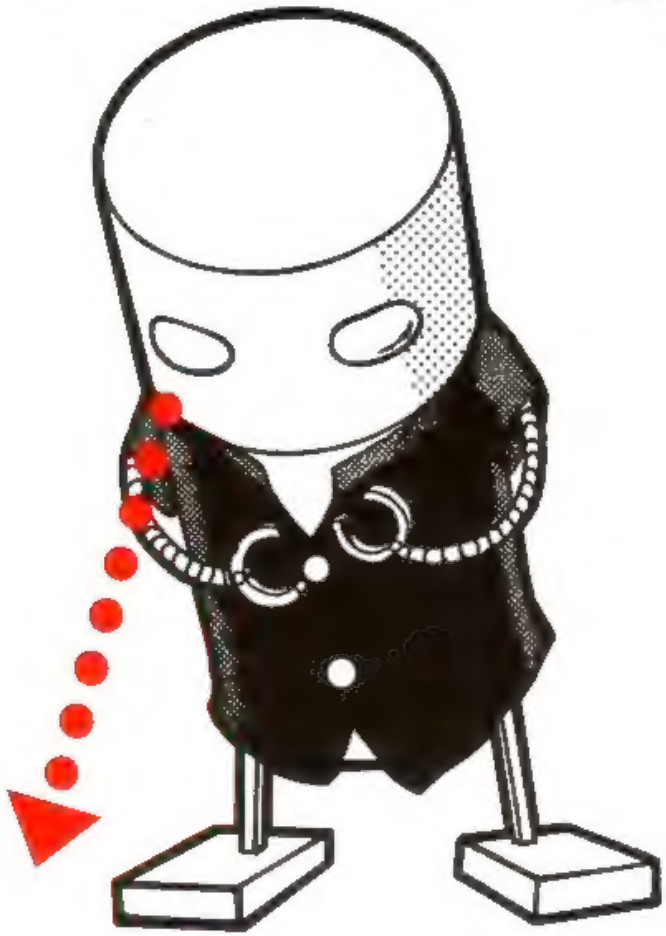
CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

VOL.2



Red 特 Black 特 Y M C

Eiji Nonaka

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL IN ATTENDANCE

THE OTOKOGI TOBIRA

THE MANLY TITLE PAGE

BANG!!

SAKIGAKE!!

Vol. 2

CROMARTIE HIGH★SCHOOL

by EIJI NONAKA

PLAYER PIECES

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

♥ Please find a game die on your own. Move ahead the same number of spaces as you roll. If you land on a warp zone, move your piece forward (or back) to the space indicated by the arrow. Whoever reaches GOAL first wins. If you'd rather not cut up this manga, please copy these pages. Or buy another volume and cut it up instead.

★ HOW TO PLAY

GOAL! YOU ARE ONE SPLENDID BADASS!

WARP ZONE

YOU'RE AT THE SOUTH WIND CAFÉ. YOU CAN'T PAY, SO YOU HAVE TO WASH DISHES. YOU GET DISHPAN HANDS. LOSE 1 TURN.

EVERYONE IS AT MAEDA'S WHEN HIS MOM SHOWS UP. YOU RECOIL IN FEAR. MOVE BACK 5 SPACES.

YOU'RE AT THE STRONG MAN COMPETITION. ADVANCE 2 SPACES FOR YOUR MARTIAL EXPLOITS.

YOU ARE SUSPENDED FOR FIGHTING THE DESTRADE BOYS. LOSE 1 TURN.

WARP ZONE

YOU'RE FRUSTRATED THAT YOU CAN'T FIGURE FREDDIE OUT. FREDDIE DOES PUSHUPS FOR NO REASON.

WARP ZONE

ERRAND BOY TO MERCHANT?! KAMIYAMA ADVANCES 3.

YOU'RE CAUGHT IN ONE OF HIRAI-SAN THE FLUNKER'S LECTURES. ENERGY... DRAINING... LOSE 1 TURN.

WARP ZONE

WARP ZONE

PROTECT OUR WORLD FROM "THE MAN"! RAISE YOUR FISTS AND GIVE A MIGHTY SHOUT! (ALL TOGETHER)

RAID ON BASS HIGH! YOU GO IN STYLE BY TAXI, BUT END UP LOST. GO BACK TO START.

A UFO HAS LANDED AT THE SCHOOL?! YOU BOARD WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT. ADVANCE TO 2 SPACES BEFORE GOAL.

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

THE MANLY BOARD GAME

THE OTOKOGI SUGOROCK

START

I'VE ENROLLED AT CROMARTIE HIGH, THE BIGGEST DEN OF THUGS IN JAPAN!

WARP ZONE

YOU'RE SHOPPING FOR ELECTRONICS, BUT SOMEONE MISTAKES YOU FOR MERCHANDISE! DO THE ROBOT DANCE, MECHAZAWA!

THE BASS GUYS HAVE COME TO PICK A FIGHT WITH TAKENOUCHI, BUT HE'S NOT AROUND! ALL BUT TAKENOUCHI ADVANCE 1 SPACE.

THOUGHT YOU'D BECOME BAD BY BLEACHING YOUR HAIR, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK. KAMIYAMA MOVES BACK 3 SPACES.

BIRTHDAY PARTY AT MAEDA'S! IN HONOR OF THE BIRTHDAY BOY, EVERYONE BUT MAEDA MOVES BACK 2 SPACES.

WARP ZONE

YOU'VE BEEN KIDNAPPED BY BASS, AND NO ONE COMES TO HELP! LOSE 1 TURN.

WARP ZONE

WARP ZONE

GET THAT BANANA! GORILLA ADVANCES 3, HAYASHIDA AND FREDDIE GO BACK 2, SINCE THEY FAILED.

EXAMS ARE COMING! SAY 3 WORDS IN ENGLISH!

WARP ZONE

PEOPLE STILL DON'T KNOW YOUR NAME! HOKUTO'S HENCHMAN, SING "BEAUTIFUL NAME"!

OUT OF OIL! MECHAZAWA GOES BACK 2.

YOU WANTED TO TAKE OVER CROMARTIE, BUT GOT LOST IN A WEB OF YOUR OWN DECEIT. HOKUTO, CONFESS YOUR LIES.

YOU'RE FEELING MOTION SICK. THEN SOMEONE HANDS YOU A PUDDING. YOU'RE DONE FOR! TAKENOUCHI LOSES 1 TURN. KAMIYAMA ADVANCES 3.

SAKIGAKE!! CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL Vol. 2

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

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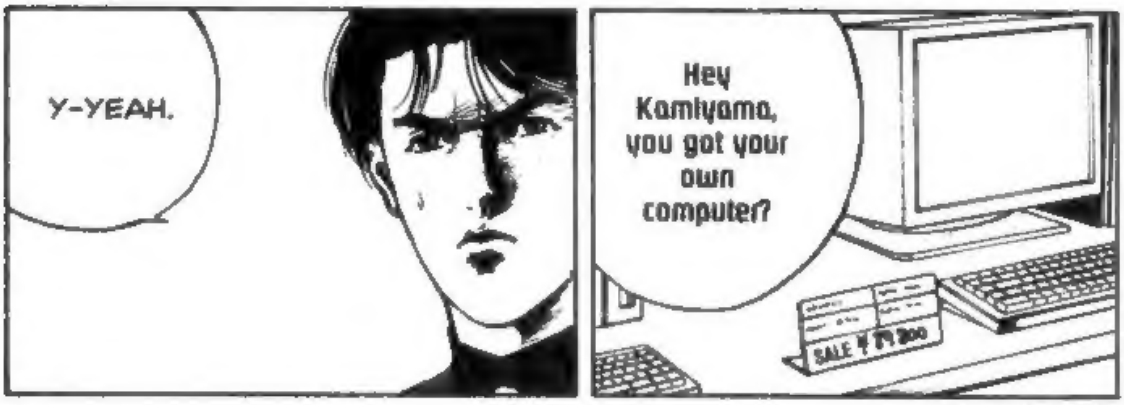
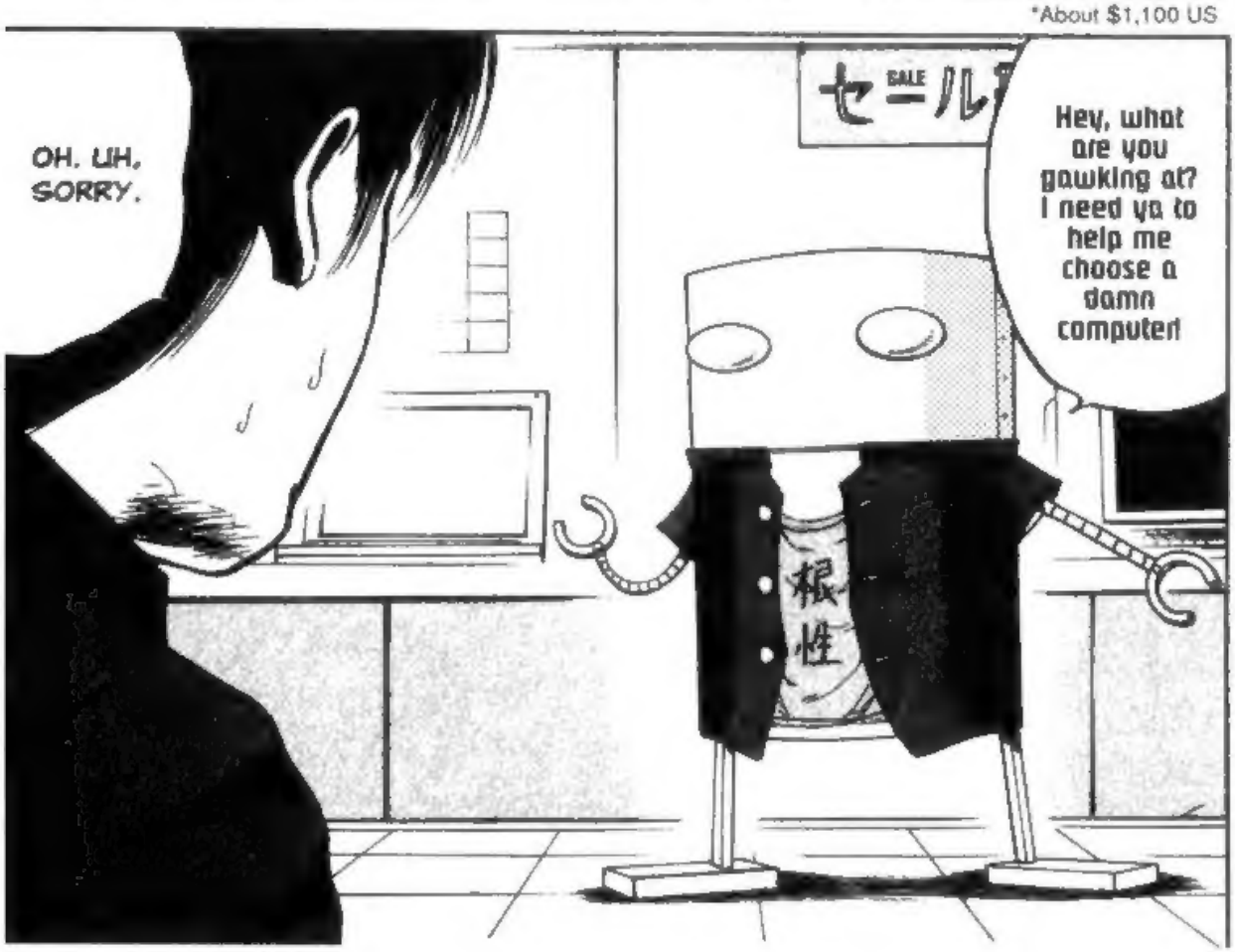
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: **SHOPPING BOOGIE**



*About $800 US

*About $1,100 US



TODAY WAS THE FIRST TIME MECHAZAWA-KUN HAD EVER ASKED ME FOR ANYTHING. I WAS SO FLABBERGASTED, ALL I COULD DO WAS FOLLOW HIM TO THIS ELECTRONICS STORE.

THAT'S ALMOST LIKE A BASEBALL PLAYER SAYING HE'S NEVER PUT ON A FIELDER'S GLOVE! MORE TO THE POINT--AND I FIND MYSELF ASKING THIS ONCE AGAIN—WHAT THE HECK IS MECHAZAWA, ANYWAY?!
NEVER TOUCHED A COMPUTER?!

EXCUSE ME, BUT THAT IS NOT FOR SALE!
NOW TETSU, YOU CAN'T HAVE EVERYTHING, YOU KNOW.
AWWW, BUT I WANT IT! C'MON, BUY THIS GUNDAM FOR ME!
根性

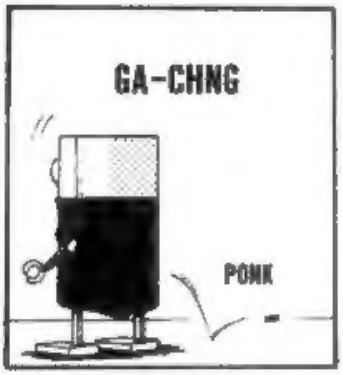
On shirt: "Guts."

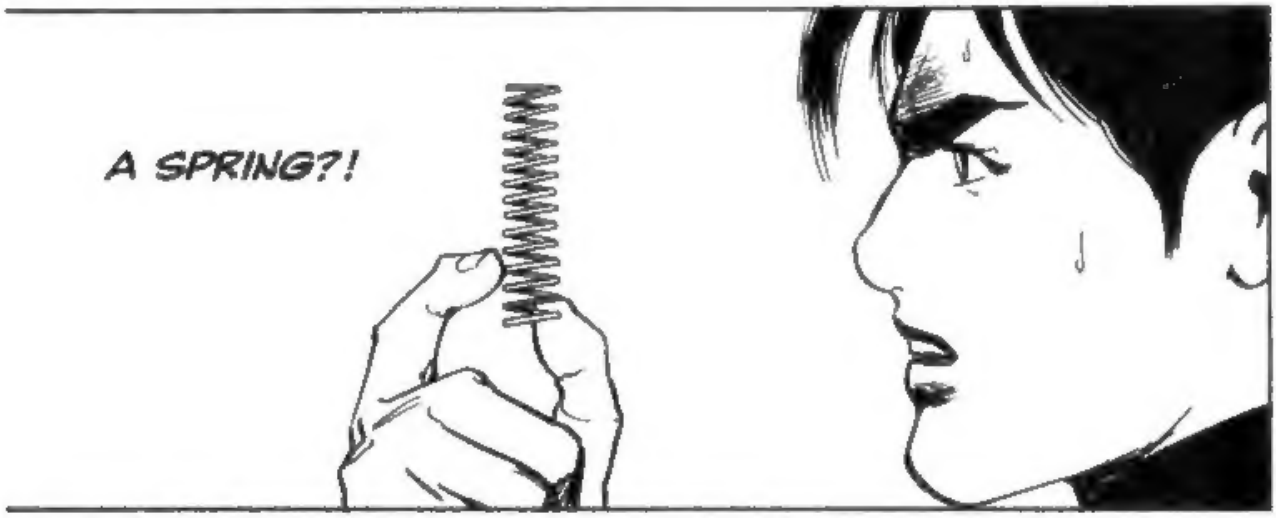
I MEAN, HE PROBABLY WOULDN'T LOOK ENTIRELY OUT OF PLACE IF I SLAPPED A TAG ON HIM AND PUT HIM ON A SHELF...
BUT SHOULD I REALLY BE SO CONCERNED?
PHEW, THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL. HANGING AROUND WITH MECHAZAWA CAN BE QUITE NERVE-WRACKING. STILL, I SUPPOSE COMING TO AN ELECTRONICS STORE WAS A RISKY VENTURE TO BEGIN WITH.
Which one should I get?
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN STAND UP FOR HIM RIGHT NOW. HE'S MY CLASSMATE, AND THIS IS A MATTER OF DUTY! IF IT COMES DOWN TO FRIENDSHIP OR COMMON SENSE, THEN I CHOOSE FRIENDSHIP!
WHAT AM I THINKING? HE'S A HUMAN BEING! YES, I THINK SO!
EARLIER, I MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT SOMETHING LIKE, "HOW THE HELL COULD IT ITCH?" BUT NO MORE! HIS BACK ITCHES, AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
Kamiyama, you mind scratching my back?
Hrm. Man, my back itches.
A LITTLE LOWER...
H-HERE?

HE...HE HAS A SWITCH ON HIS BACK!
SWITCH
I WANT TO PRESS IT.
IT WOULD BE QUITE RUDE TO JUST PICK SOMEONE ELSE'S SCABS WITHOUT ASKING, THOUGH.
IT'S THE SAME KIND OF FEELING I GET WHEN I SEE A SCAB ON SOMEONE AND THINK, "HMM, I'D LIKE TO PEEL THAT OFF."
ARGH, I WANT TO PRESS IT!

SO WHAT IF HE HAS A SWITCH ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD? MAYBE I HAVE A SWITCH ON MY HEAD, AND I JUST NEVER NOTICED. THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD, THERE MUST BE AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR OTHERS LIKE THAT.
ENOUGH! I NEED TO CLEAR MY MIND OF SUCH THOUGHTS. I MUST COMPOSE MYSELF.

Huh?
UH, YOU DROPPED SOMETHING.


GA-CHNG
PONK

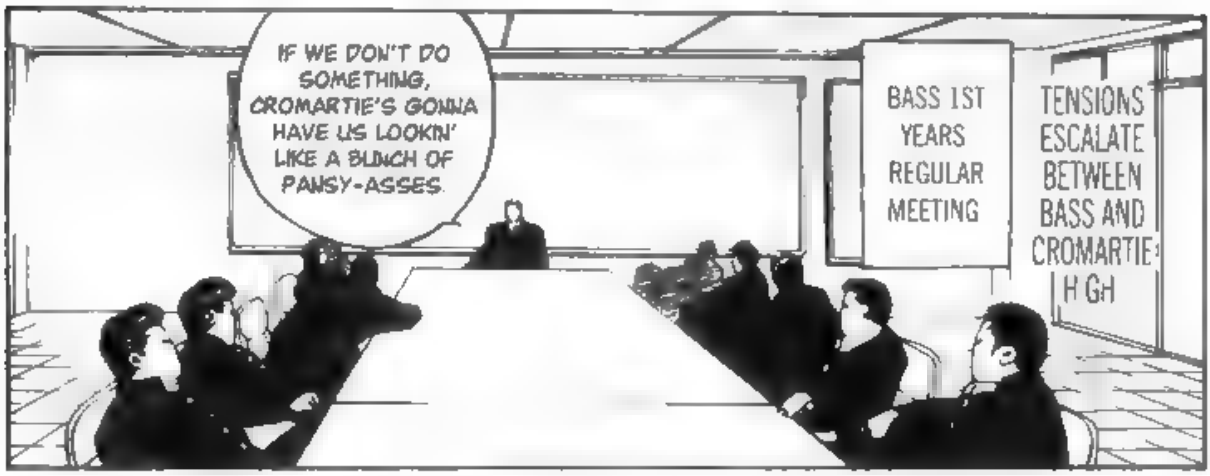

A SPRING?!

NO! GET A GRIP! I CAN'T LET THIS AFFECT OUR FRIENDSHIP! THIS IS A VERY LARGE WORLD, INDEED. I'LL BET THERE ARE SEVERAL PEOPLE OUT THERE WITH SPRINGS ATTACHED TO THEM!
OH, BOY. THIS COULD DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN US. NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, A SPRING MEANS...

BUT THAT WAS THEN. NOW, I'VE COME TO SEE YOU AS A CLOSE FRIEND. AND, YES, HUMAN.
I-I ONCE MISTOOK YOU FOR SOMETHING ELSE.
I DON'T CARE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK, MECHAZAWA-KUN. TO ME, YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HUMAN.
EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT THAT IS A WASHING MACHINE.
WHAT?! MY GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT!
AS ADVERTISED
CLEARANCE
VRMM
AND EVEN WORSE, THEY SOLD HIM!

MECHAZAWA'S BEEN PURCHASED.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: **THE MEETING GOES ON AND ON**


IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, CROMARTIE'S GONNA HAVE US LOOKIN' LIKE A BUNCH OF PANSY-ASSES.
BASS 1ST YEARS REGULAR MEETING
TENSIONS ESCALATE BETWEEN BASS AND CROMARTIE HIGH

OUR 2ND YEAR GUYS ARE ALREADY SCARED OF THOSE CROMARTIE GOONS. THAT'S JUST GONNA MAKE US LOOK BAD, TOO!
JACKSON SETOUCHI (16)
ACTING BOSS OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS AT BASS HIGH HIS FORMIDABLE STRENGTH HAS EARNED HIM THE NICKNAME. "BASS HIGH S KING OF DESTRUCTION"

SO GREAT ARE HIS ACHIEVEMENTS THAT IT IS SAID BASS HIGH COULD NOT FUNCTION WITHOUT HIM
AKIO TAKEJO (16)
SETOUCHI'S MOST TRUSTED FRIEND AND RIGHT HAND MAN. HE IS #2 AMONG BASS'S 1ST YEAR CLASS

EVEN IF THE 2ND YEARS ARE A PACK OF FRICKIN' IDIOTS, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT IT. THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS.
NO. IT'S A BASS HIGH TRADITION TO RESPECT THE PECKING ORDER.

BASS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A NOTCH OR TWO BELOW CROMARTIE, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I DON'T SEE ANY PROBLEM WITH US IST YEARS PUTTING AN END TO THAT.
CROMARTIE'S TOUGH... ESPECIALLY THAT TAKENOUCHI GUY I HEAR HE'S OUTTA CONTROL.
HE'S GOT A NOSE HAIR HANGING OUT.
ISN'T THAT BEIN', LIKE, A LITTLE HASTY?
YOU MEAN, TAKE CARE OF CROMARTIE ON OUR OWN?!
YEAH, IT'S HANGING OUT, ALRIGHT.
WILL WE TURN TAIL AND RUN? OR WILL WE FIGHT?!
IN THE NAME OF BASS, WE MUST DECIDE...

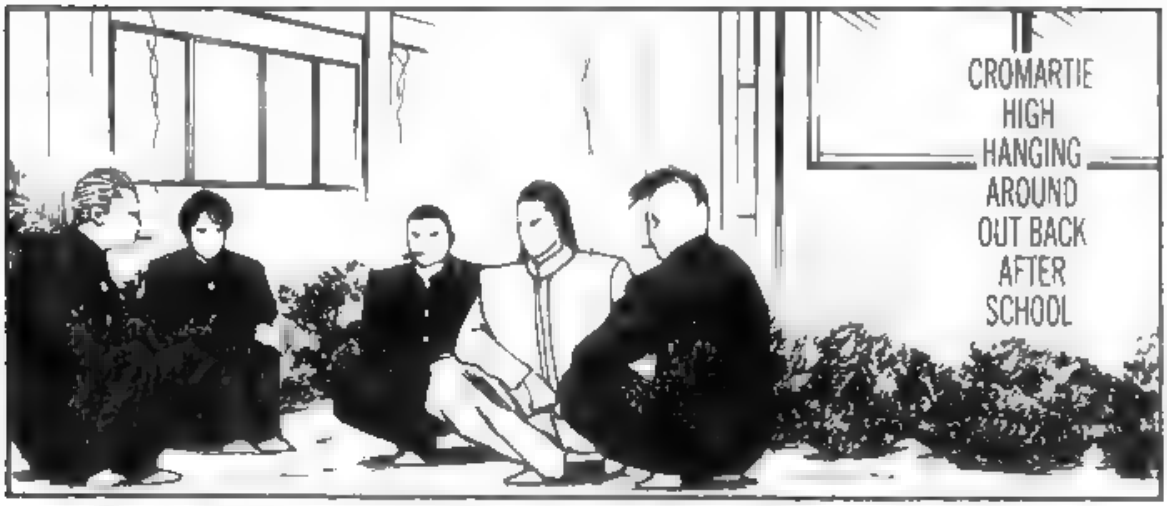
I CAN'T CONCENTRATE.
THIS IS REALLY BUGGIN' ME.
I ADMIT, CROMARTIE IS PRETTY SCARY...
YES! HE FINALLY NOTICED! MY PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. NOW I CAN RELA...
IT MOVED!
WHAT THE?!
THAT'S RIGHT. THINK CALMLY. IT'S SCIENTIFICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR NOSTRIL HAIRS TO MIGRATE. WAIT, HE JUST TOUCHED HIS NOSE AGAIN. IS IT GOING TO SWITCH BACK TO THE OTHER NOSTRIL NOW?
BUT JUST THINK ABOUT IT CALMLY. IF IT COMES TO A BRAWL, WE CAN TAKE 'EM!

THERE'S
MORE
OF
THEM!

SO TAKING ON CROMARTIE IS TOO RISKY!
HEY, CHECK IT OUT. TAKEJO ACTUALLY LOST HIS COOL. I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THIS!
HUH? M-ME?!
BUT THIS ISN'T SOMETHING I CAN DECIDE ALL ON MY OWN, TAKEJO! I WANT YOU TO DECIDE FOR US. I TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT, AND I WON'T COMPLAIN NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY.
WHAT WERE THEY TALKING ABOUT? AH, WHO CARES?! I STILL CAN'T DECIDE IF I SHOULD SAY SOMETHING ABOUT HIS DAMN NOSE HAIR!
ACT CONFUSED IF YOU LIKE, BUT IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY!
NOT GOOD. I WASN'T LISTENING AT ALL.
NO! I WANT TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE HAIRS HANGIN' OUT OF YOUR NOSE!
"WE'RE GOIN' TO WAR WITH CROMARTIE!" THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY, ISN'T IT, TAKEJO?!
WHAT?! I'VE JUST NOTICED SOMETHING INCREDIBLY SIGNIFICANT!

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR NOSE HAIR.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX: **YOU KNOW MY NAME**



"YOU"?!
I'LL BET, UH, YOU RESEMBLE ONE OF YOUR PARENTS, TOO. DON'T YOU?
HA HA HA HA
UH, WORLD DOMINATION, I GUESS...
HEY, WHAT DID EVERYONE DREAM OF DOING WHEN THEY WERE KIDS? HOW ABOUT YOU, HOKUTO?
YOUR GRANDPA?! BWAHAHA!
NAH. I LOOK LIKE MY GRANDPA THE MOST.
HA HA! FREDDIE'S NOT GOING TO ANSWER YOU!
I DOUBT HE EVER WAS A KID!
. . .
WHAT ABOUT YOU, FREDDIE? WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM?
. . . . . .
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, UM...

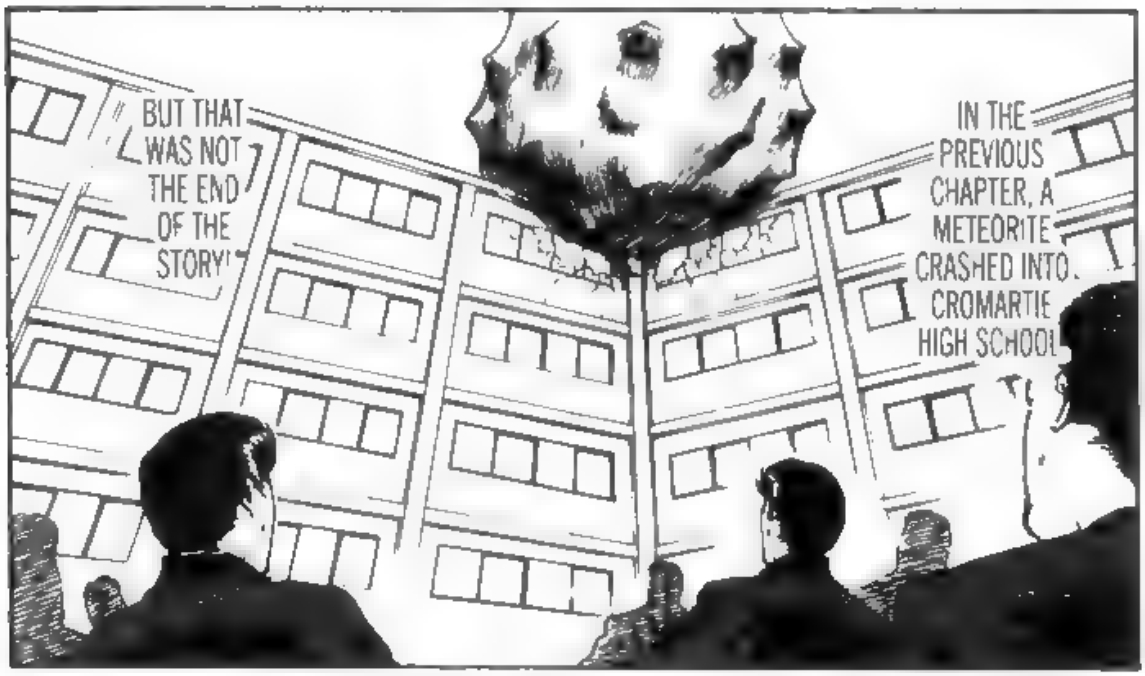
EVERYONE KEEPS CALLING ME "YOU" OR "DUDE" AND STUFF. I WANT YOU TO CALL ME BY MY NAME, ALRIGHT?
NOW WAIT JUST A DAMN SECOND!
DUDE?
WHAT?! COME ON, NOW! I'VE BEEN AT THIS SCHOOL FOR SIX MONTHS ALREADY!
SORRY.
. . .
. . .
YOU DO KNOW MY NAME, DON'T YOU?
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! AND WHY DID YOU HAVE TO BE SO BLUNT ABOUT IT?!
NO.
WELL, WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME. YOU REMEMBER MY NAME, RIGHT?
HOW CAN YOU SAY SOME-THING SO TERRIBLE AND BE SO CALM ABOUT IT?!
NONE OF US REALLY CARE.
Y-YES?
I THINK THE REASON WE DON'T KNOW IS THAT...

HEY! WHAT THE HELL'S YOUR PROBLEM, HAYASHIDA?!
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT...
MY NAME IS...
FINE! WHY DON'T I JUST INTRODUCE MYSELF AGAIN?
MY NAME IS...
Saying "thank you" sounded kinda weird...
THANK YOU. NOW, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF
YEAH, THAT WAS KINDA CHILDISH OF ME. SORRY.
I THINK THAT WAS A LITTLE CRUEL. WE SHOULD KEEP QUIET AND HEAR HIM OUT.
OUTTA THE WAY! I'LL CLEAN IT UP!
COME ON ALREADY!
AW, MAN! FREDDIE SPILLED THE JUICE!
splash
OK. AS I WAS SAYING, MY NAME IS...
SHUFFE SHUFFE
squik
squik
mop
HOW YA LIKE ME NOW?! SPICK AND SPAN! NOW DON'T MESS IT UP AGAIN!

I'VE NEVER SEEN A GUY GO THROUGH SO MUCH JUST SO HE CAN TELL PEOPLE HIS NAME.
WHAT ARE YOU, OUR GOFER?
HERE, I GOT THIRTY OF 'EM. IT'S ON ME, SO DRINK UP!
FINE! I'LL GET YOU SOME SODAS OR SOME-THING!
DAMN, I'M SO THIRSTY
NOW WE'RE OUT OF JUICE.
FINE! I'LL GO JOIN IN!
HEY, A FIGHT STARTED IN THE CLASS NEXT DOOR!
MY NAME IS...
OK! NOW I'M GONNA TELL YA!
NO, NOTHING.
NOW, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO TAKE CARE OF? 'CUZ IF THERE IS, NOW'S THE TIME TO SAY SO!
I NEVER KNEW YOU WERE SO TOUGH.
BUT I GOT PRETTY MESSED UP, TOO.
I BEAT THE SNOT OUTTA ALL OF 'EM.
30 MINUTES LATER
NOW I CAN FINALLY TELL YOU MY NAME.
ALRIGHT, THEN. IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE TAKEN CARE OF EVERYTHING.

UH, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN: **SHOOTING STAR PRESS**



KA-POP
IT POPPED OPEN!

WHAT DO YOU WANT?!
WOULD YOU JUST LISTEN FOR A SECOND?

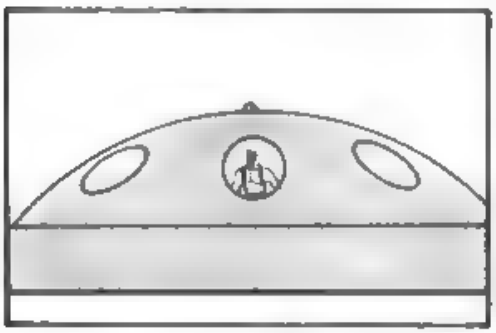
WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO US NOW?
DUDE, WHAT THE HELL?!

AREN'T YOU GUYS FORGETTING SOMETHING THAT'S A LITTLE MORE IMPORTANT?
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT SOME METEORITE? I MEAN, SURE IT POPPED OPEN, BUT SO WHAT?

SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING, I'M SURE THAT METEORITE IS PRETTY SIGNIFICANT. BUT AS FAR AS **YOU'RE** CONCERNED, ISN'T IT MORE IMPORTANT TO KNOW YOUR FRIENDS' NAMES?
MY NAME!
MORE IMPOR-TANT? LIKE WHAT?
THAT'S PUTTING IT RATHER BLUNTLY, HAYASHIDA-KUN. THOUGH IT IS A VALID OPINION
IT DON'T REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF WE KNOW YOUR NAME OR NOT, DUDE
YOU HAVE A POINT... BUT WHETHER OR NOT YOUR NAME IS MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN THE METEORITE IS A MATTER BEST DETERMINED BY GROUP DELIBERATION.
'CUZ I'M **RIGHT**! IT'S MORE IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW MY NAME.
DAMN. THAT'S ROUGH.
BUT I'M YOUR FRIEND! WHAT CAN YOU SAY ABOUT A METEORITE?! YOU'RE JUST GONNA FREAK AND SAY THINGS LIKE "WHOA!" AND "CHECK IT OUT!" YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ASTRONOMY!
NOW WHAT?!
WHOA, CHECK IT OUT!
MY NAME IS...
OK. HERE GOES.
THANKS! I PROMISE I'LL MAKE IT QUICK!
HUH. I GUESS YOU SHOULD TELL US, THEN.

ALIENS ARE COMING OUT OF IT!
FWOO PRR
FWOO PRR
FWOO PRR
Aliens use rope ladders?
HOLY CRAP!
THEY'RE CLIMBING DOWN ON A ROPE LADDER!
Take your time going down.
Watch your step.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?!
THIS IS GETTING OUTTA CONTROL!
R-RUN FOR IT!
stomp
stomp
LIKE HELL! I AIN'T LISTENIN' TO NO ALIEN INTRODUCE HIMSELF!
WHA...
Greetings, Earthlings. We are aliens. Allow us to introduce ourselves.
Hm? Who are you?
WAIT!
A pity.
It seems they're running away.

THANKS. I KNEW YOU'D UNDERSTAND, EVEN IF MY FELLOW EARTHLINGS DON'T.
Very well. Feel free to introduce yourself to us.
I'M JUST A MISERABLE MAN WHO MISSED THE CHANCE TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF TO HIS FRIENDS. IF THAT'S HOW IT HAS TO BE, THEN I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE ALIENS— PLEASE, LET ME TELL YOU MY NAME!
HUH?!
Ah. Already?
Captain, it's time.
MY NAME IS...
OK, ALIENS!
HOVER
Fare-well.
WHY'D THEY EVEN COME?
THERE THEY GO
MY NAME...
BWOOOOR
VWEEE
They've come for us.
SEEING YOUR EXCHANGE WITH THE ALIENS JUST NOW MADE ME WANT TO RECONSIDER WHAT I SAID EARLIER. AS A FELLOW EARTHLING, I OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED. PLEASE, TELL US YOUR NAME! WE'D LOVE TO HEAR IT!
HM?
GOT A SEC?
EVEN ALIENS IGNORE ME.
.....



FAREWELL, FREDDIE.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 1

TAKASHI KAMIYAMA

This manga's protagonist .or at least he was supposed to be. Lately, it seems he's getting pushed farther and farther into the background. He is an honors student who somehow ended up enrolling at Japan's lowest and most vile high school, Cromartie High Before anyone knew it, he'd managed to adjust to this new environment, and he is now enjoying an active school life. He is thought to be a very composed young man One of Takashi's hobbies is contributing to a late-night radio program The jokes he writes are of such high quality he could probably make a career out of it. His pen name is "Honey Boy," for the simple reason that during a certain meeting, the author had some honey on his desk Kamiyama's catchphrase is, "Dear Mother." I wonder why .

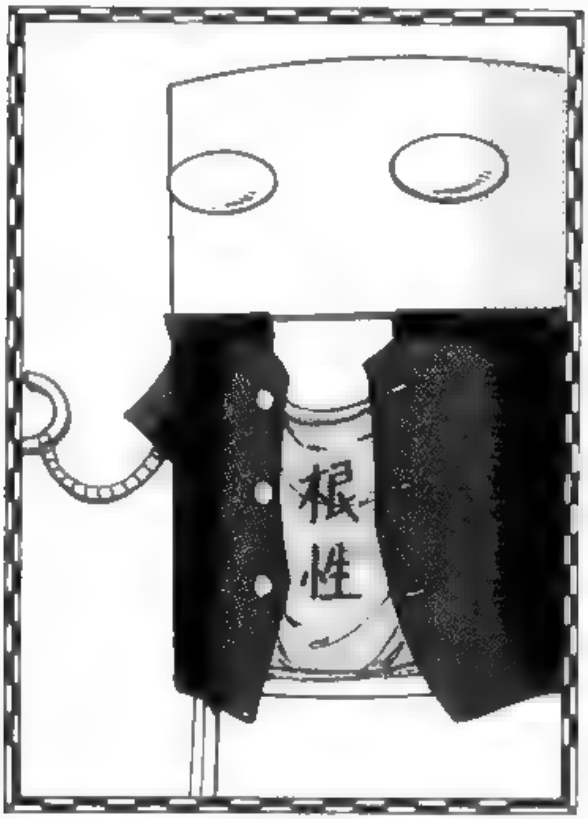
SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA

A student at Cromartie High, which is notorious for admitting students so long as they can add or subtract—except Hayashida is unable to do even that. His trademark feature is his mohawk Hayashida is an idiot who realizes his idiocy, but who nonetheless has interfered with the progression of the story on more than one occasion. In Volume 1, it was revealed that his intelligence is lower than that of a gorilla As a moron, he stands out among the students of Cromartie, and at times his buffoonery has stunned longtime readers—small wonder, since he has occasionally even stunned the author Recently, Hayashida has been operating in full friendship mode with Kamiyama and Maeda His hobby is making a nuisance of himself at Maeda's house, and his catchphrase is, "Not to change the subject, but "

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 2

AKIRA MAEDA

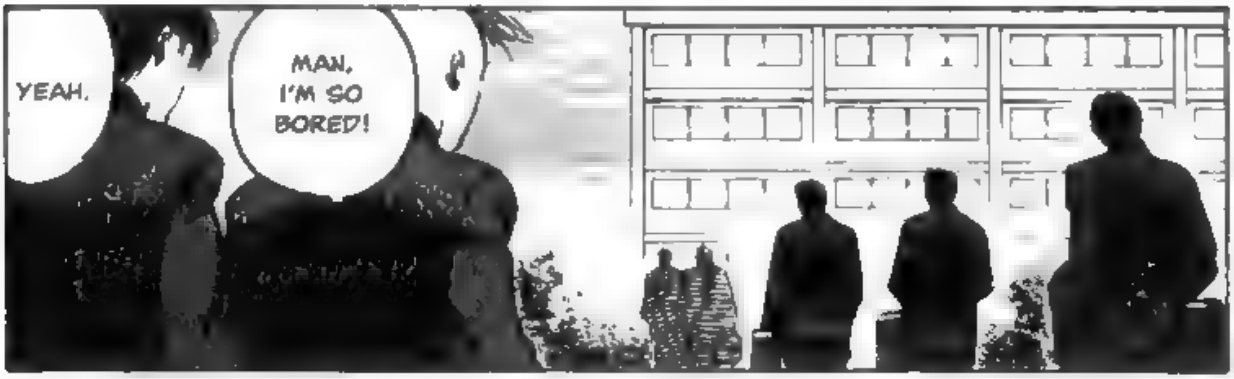
He finally got himself a nickname—"The Dragon of Razors." Sadly, however, nobody calls him that. Instead, Maeda continues to play second fiddle to all the buffoons at Cromartie. He is constantly getting kidnapped by other schools, but no one ever comes to his rescue. People tend to hang out at his house without asking if it's alright. He gets walked over, pushed around, and is often the victim of various misfortunes. He worries that he doesn't have any sort of presence, which makes you want to give him a pat on the shoulder and say, "But you do have presence—and plenty of it!" His catchphrase is, "Whoa, wait a minute!" He is renowned throughout Japan for his startling resemblance to his mother.

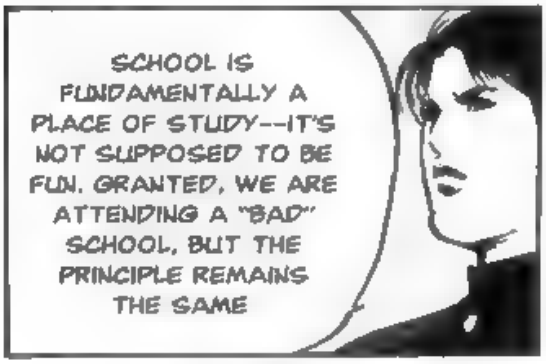


SHINICHI MECHAZAWA

Truly, a man among men at Cromartie. And **not** a machine among machines. Outside of Kamiyama's group, nobody (for some reason) doubts his humanity, allowing him to lead a normal school life. Since Mechazawa believes he is in fact human, Kamiyama and the others cannot bring themselves to inform him otherwise. It's just one of those awkward situations, like if you were to tell someone who wears a hairpiece, "Hey man, your toupee's not on right." Mechazawa was rated the #1 most popular character in a recent *Shonen Magazine* poll, which is why he is featured on the cover of this volume. All the girls are talking about how "cute" he is... even though he's just a tin can (LOL).

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT: **THE IDLE MAEDA**



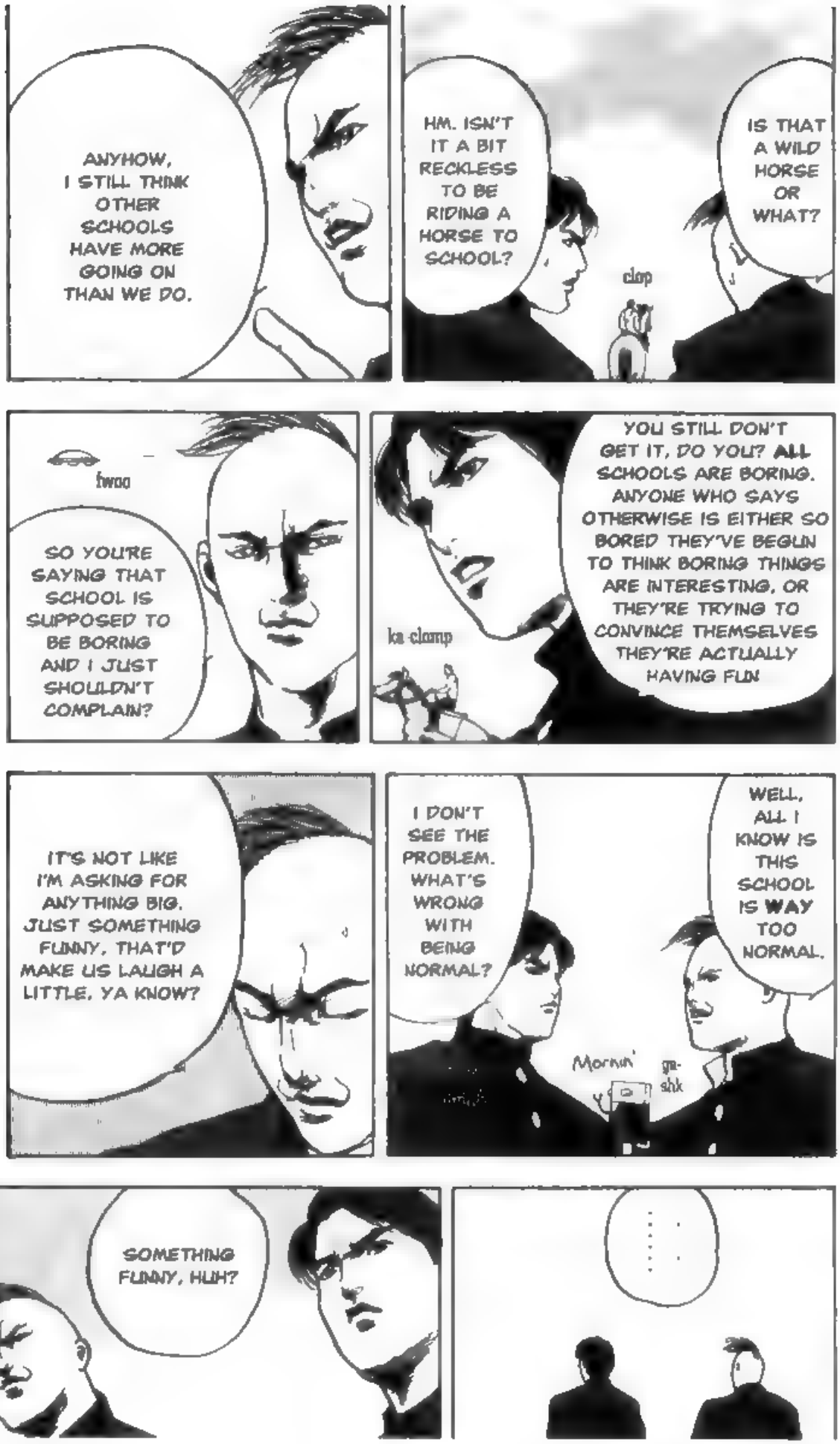

SCHOOL IS FUNDAMENTALLY A PLACE OF STUDY--IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE FUN. GRANTED, WE ARE ATTENDING A "BAD" SCHOOL, BUT THE PRINCIPLE REMAINS THE SAME

BUT AT THE SAME TIME, YOU'RE CULTIVATING THE FORTITUDE NEEDED TO DEAL WITH SOCIETY
YEAH, BUT AT THIS TENDER AGE, GETTIN' SO BORED IS ALMOST LIKE **TORTURE** OR SOMETHING.

VWORRR
HUH?!

ANYHOW, A LOT OF DELINQUENTS DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT BECAUSE SCHOOL IS A PLACE FOR STUDYING, YOU CAN'T EXPECT ANYTHING INTERESTING OR EVEN SURPRISING TO HAPPEN HERE.
I DON'T SEE WHY HE'D NEED TO RIDE A HORSE TO SCHOOL...
I THOUGHT HE WENT TO SPACE.
FREDDIE'S GOT A HORSE, MAN.
clap
THEN YOUR FRIENDS ARE EXAGGERATING! I'M TELLING YOU, THEIR SCHOOLS ARE AS NORMAL AS OURS!
BUT SOME DUDES I KNOW SAY THAT THEIR SCHOOLS ARE FRICKIN' AWESOME!
NO! SUCH THINGS ARE MERE ILLUSIONS, LIKE A CHILD BELIEVING THAT SOMEONE ELSE'S TOYS ARE BETTER THAN HIS OWN!
BUT DON'T YOU THINK OTHER SCHOOLS COULD BE MORE INTERESTING THAN CROMARTIE?
IN OTHER WORDS, EVERYONE IS BORED, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO BELIEVE THEIR LIFE IS BORING--SO THEY CONVINCE THEMSELVES THAT THINGS ARE ACTUALLY QUITE INTERESTING. IT'S AS I SAID BEFORE--ALL SCHOOLS ARE THE SAME. AND NORMAL.
LISTEN, AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE TOLD ME THAT HE RECENTLY BECAME FRIENDS WITH A "TOTALLY WILD DUDE." BUT WHEN I MET THE PERSON MYSELF, HE TURNED OUT TO BE COMPLETELY NORMAL! STORIES LIKE THIS ARE EXTREMELY COMMON.
I'M SORRY, BUT THERE'S JUST NOTHING HERE FOR PEOPLE TO GET EXCITED OVER. I GUARANTEE IT.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. ALL I KNOW IS I WANT MORE ACTION!

CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP
WHOA!


ANYHOW, I STILL THINK OTHER SCHOOLS HAVE MORE GOING ON THAN WE DO.
HM. ISN'T IT A BIT RECKLESS TO BE RIDING A HORSE TO SCHOOL?
clop
IS THAT A WILD HORSE OR WHAT?
fwoo
SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT SCHOOL IS SUPPOSED TO BE BORING AND I JUST SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN?
ka clomp
YOU STILL DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? ALL SCHOOLS ARE BORING. ANYONE WHO SAYS OTHERWISE IS EITHER SO BORED THEY'VE BEGUN TO THINK BORING THINGS ARE INTERESTING, OR THEY'RE TRYING TO CONVINCE THEMSELVES THEY'RE ACTUALLY HAVING FUN
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M ASKING FOR ANYTHING BIG. JUST SOMETHING FUNNY, THAT'D MAKE US LAUGH A LITTLE, YA KNOW?
I DON'T SEE THE PROBLEM. WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING NORMAL?
WELL, ALL I KNOW IS THIS SCHOOL IS WAY TOO NORMAL.
Mornin'
ga-shk
SOMETHING FUNNY, HUH?
. . . . .

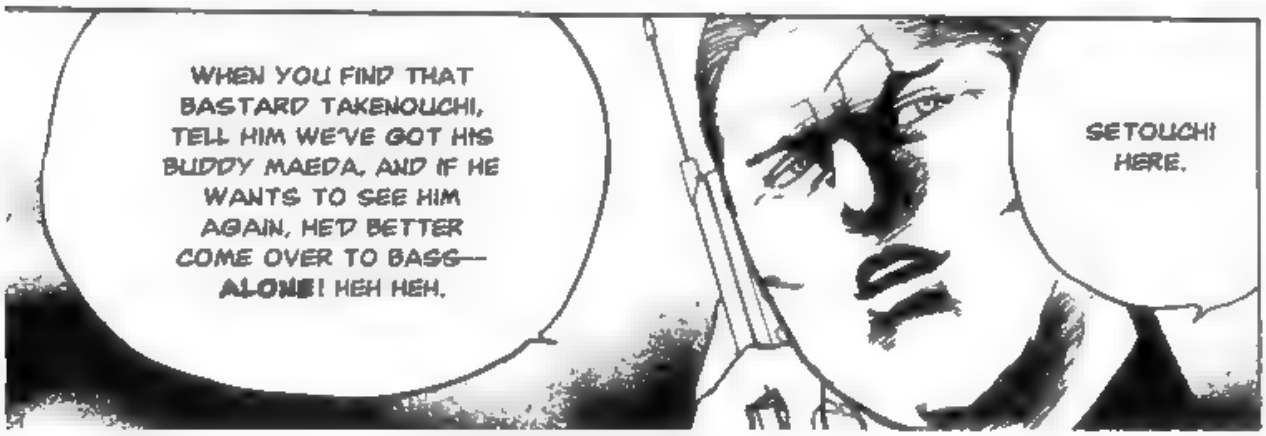
YEOW!
OH, NO! THAT HORSE IS BITING MAEDA'S HEAD!

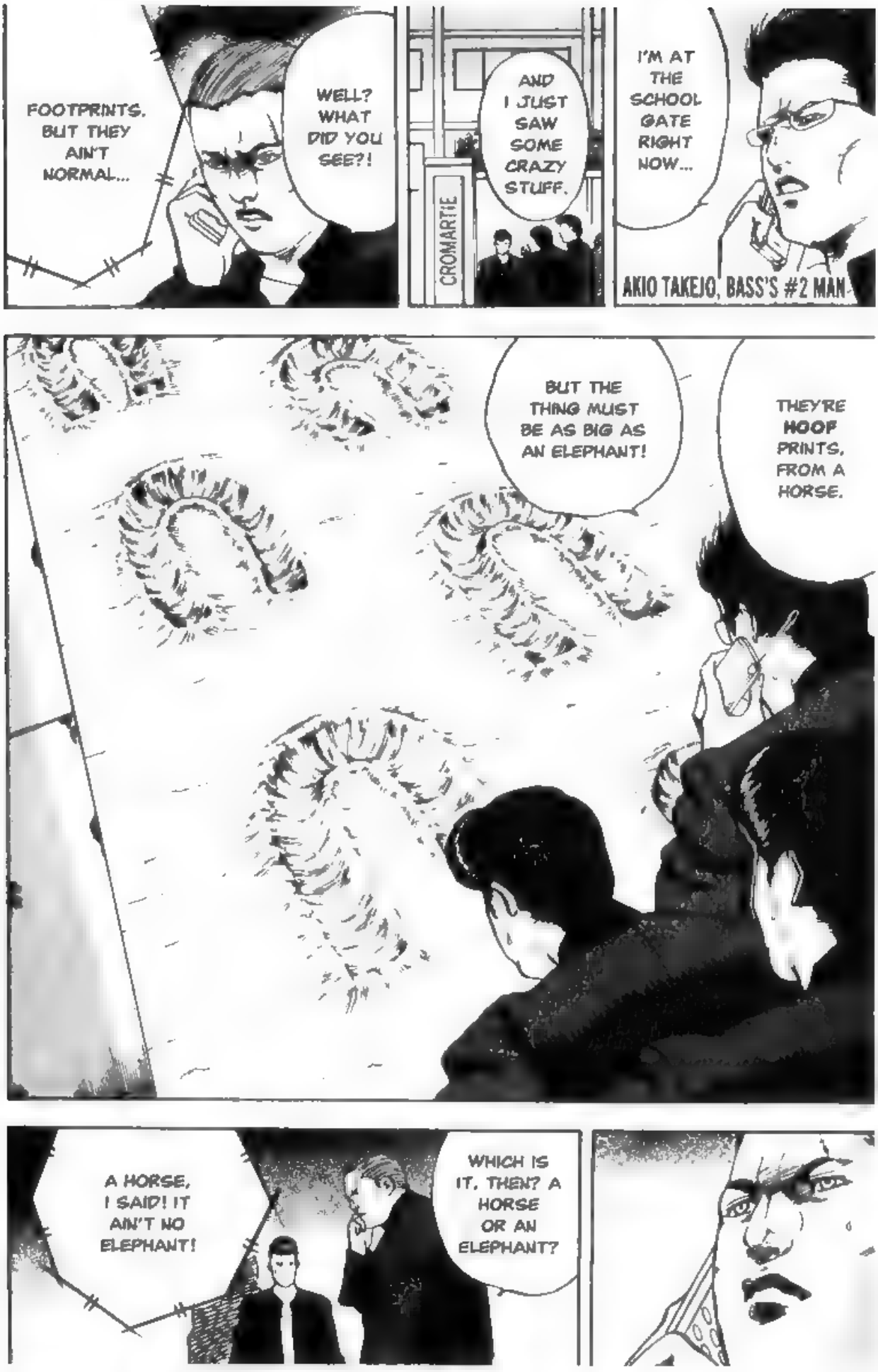
THE HELL IT DOES!
MAN, STUFF LIKE THAT ALWAYS HAPPENS.

IT DOESN'T.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE:

AT LEAST IT'S A BATTLE WITHOUT HONOR AND HUMANITY


WHEN YOU FIND THAT BASTARD TAKENOUCHI, TELL HIM WE'VE GOT HIS BUDDY MAEDA, AND IF HE WANTS TO SEE HIM AGAIN, HE'D BETTER COME OVER TO BASS— ALONE! HEH HEH.
SETOUCHI HERE.


FOOTPRINTS. BUT THEY AIN'T NORMAL...
WELL? WHAT DID YOU SEE?!
CROMARTIE
AND I JUST SAW SOME CRAZY STUFF.
I'M AT THE SCHOOL GATE RIGHT NOW...
AKIO TAKEJO, BASS'S #2 MAN
BUT THE THING MUST BE AS BIG AS AN ELEPHANT!
THEY'RE HOOF PRINTS, FROM A HORSE.
A HORSE, I SAID! IT AIN'T NO ELEPHANT!
WHICH IS IT, THEN? A HORSE OR AN ELEPHANT?

HMM. I CAN'T REALLY GET A GOOD IDEA UNLESS I SEE IT FOR MYSELF.
LOOK, I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT. ANYWAY, WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO?
CALM DOWN! THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU
IT'S A BIG-ASS HORSE, ALRIGHT?! I WAS JUST THINKING MAYBE IT WAS TOO BIG TO BE A HORSE.
BUT THERE IS A GUY WHO RIDES HIS HORSE TO SCHOOL.
NAH, WE DON'T HAVE ANY HORSES.
HEY! YOU GUYS KEEP HORSES AT YOUR SCHOOL?
SO? WE HAVE ONE IN OUR CAFETERIA.
A SNACK MACHINE! THEY GOT A SNACK MACHINE RIGHT BY THE GATE!
HUH? WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?!
OH, MAN! WE JUST FOUND SOMETHIN' ELSE REALLY CRAZY!
OK, LISTEN CAREFULLY. IT...
HOW IS IT DIFFERENT, THEN?!
YOU DON'T GET IT! THIS AIN'T NO NORMAL SNACK MACHINE!

IT WON'T TAKE OUR MONEY!
努力
THAT... THAT'S PROBABLY NOT A SNACK MACHINE.
THEY'VE GOT A GORILLA!
NOT AGAIN.
OH, DAMN! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE WHAT WE FOUND NOW!
I NEVER SAW NO GUY WHO LOOKED LIKE A GORILLA HERE.
NO! IT'S NOT A GUY WHO LOOKS LIKE A GORILLA--IT'S THE REAL THING!
EVERY SCHOOL'S GOT AT LEAST ONE OR TWO GUYS WHO LOOK LIKE GORILLAS, ALRIGHT?
LISTEN.

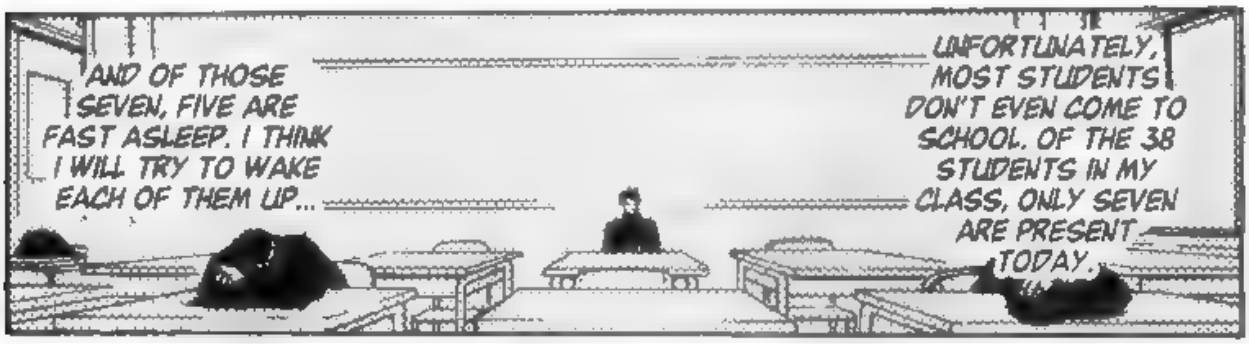
Waugh
WHY THE HELL WOULD A GORILLA BE WEARIN' A UNIFORM?!
OOGA
AND...IS THIS GORILLA WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM, BY ANY CHANCE?
SO THEY HAVE A GORILLA.
FINE.
BUT WE DON'T KNOW IF IT'S A STUDENT OR NOT.
YEAH.
YOU GUYS HAVE A GORILLA?
WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE CRAZIER THAN A GORILLA?
LOOK.
OH, MAN! WE FOUND SOMETHIN' EVEN CRAZIER!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE RUNNING INTO SPACEMEN OR SOMETHING.
I MEAN, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SOMETHING LIKE...

WE FEEL FOR YOU, SETOUCHI.

CHAPTER THIRTY: **SLEEPERS**

DEAR MOTHER, QUITE SOME TIME HAS PASSED SINCE I ENROLLED HERE AT CROMARTIE. INITIALLY, I WORKED HARD TOWARD MY GOAL OF CHANGING THIS SCHOOL...
BUT A LOT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THEN, CERTAINLY MORE THAN I AM ABLE TO RELAY TO YOU AT THE MOMENT.
Not to mention that the readers seem to have forgotten I'M the hero of this manga.

HOWEVER, I HAVE AGAIN MADE IT MY MISSION TO REFORM THESE "BAD" STUDENTS...
ESTABLISHING A MORE SOLID **PRESENCE** FOR MYSELF IN THE PROCESS.


UNFORTUNATELY, MOST STUDENTS DON'T EVEN COME TO SCHOOL. OF THE 38 STUDENTS IN MY CLASS, ONLY SEVEN ARE PRESENT TODAY.
AND OF THOSE SEVEN, FIVE ARE FAST ASLEEP. I THINK I WILL TRY TO WAKE EACH OF THEM UP...

EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR MY FRIEND HAYASHIDA-KUN, WHO HAS SPREAD OUT A FUTON TO SLEEP ON.
I'LL LEAVE THAT IDIOT ALONE FOR THE TIME BEING.

FREDDIE IS UNUSUALLY STUDIOUS TODAY. I NEVER EVEN KNEW HE HAD A SERIOUS SIDE. IT JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT YOU SHOULDN'T JUDGE PEOPLE BY APPEARANCES.

SAY, FREDDIE...

FREDDIE?

HE'S SLEEPING WITH HIS EYES OPEN!

ZZZ
STILL, HE IS THE MOST FEROCIOUS STUDENT IN OUR CLASS. IF I GO ABOUT THIS THE WRONG WAY, HE MIGHT KILL ME...
BUT NO! I WON'T BACK DOWN IN THE FACE OF A CHALLENGE!
I'LL START WITH WATANABE-KUN INSTEAD
I'LL JUST LET HIM BE FOR NOW. AFTER ALL, HE'S NOT EVEN IN THIS CLASS.
IN A WAY, THIS IS SOMETHING OF A TALENT. IF I WERE TO AWAKEN HIM NOW, IT WOULD ONLY HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ABILITY
UM... CONSIDERING THAT WE'RE STILL IN CLASS, I THOUGHT THE MOST PRUDENT COURSE WOULD BE TO WAKE YOU.
HUH? WHAT THE HELL DO YA WANT?!
PLEASE WAKE UP.
P-PERISH THE THOUGHT! IF I HAVE OFFENDED YOU IN ANY WAY, PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES!
OH, I GOT IT. YA WANNA FIGHT, HUH?
.....
HUH?
BY THE WAY, WHAT WERE YOU DREAMING ABOUT?
TELL YOU WHAT. I GIVE IN! YOU CAN GO RIGHT BACK TO SLEEP. BUT I MUST GIVE YOU FAIR WARNING. YOU WILL NOT MAKE ANY ACADEMIC PROGRESS IF YOU SLEEP THROUGH CLASS.

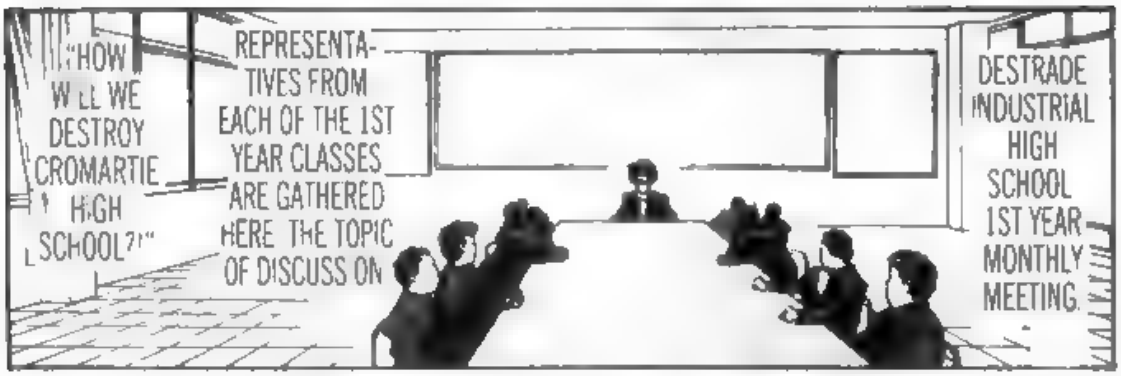
IT WAS THAT GOOD, HUH?
INCIDENTALLY, I HAD A VERY INTERESTING DREAM THE OTHER NIGHT. WOULD YOU CARE TO HEAR IT?
SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT DREAMS ARE ESSENTIAL TO CULTIVATING A HEALTHY IMAGINATION.
A TERRIBLE DEMON HAD APPEARED, BRINGING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION. HUMANITY WAS BEING SLAUGHTERED.
THE WORLD WAS ENGULFED IN DARKNESS.
HOWEVER, I WAS FACED WITH A MOST UNEXPECTED PITFALL.
HEH. YOU GOT SOME BRASS ONES, EVEN IN YOUR DREAMS.
I, OF COURSE, WAS THE HERO, WHO WOULD FIGHT AND HOPEFULLY DEFEAT THE DEMON.
WHO CAN SAY? THINGS LIKE THAT JUST HAPPEN IN DREAMS.
WHY WOULD YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH REGISTRATION TO BE A HERO?
IN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE DEMON, I FIRST HAD TO UNDERGO REGISTRATION AT CITY HALL FOR MY HERO'S LICENSE.

I WAS ALMOST CERTAIN IT WAS THE LINE I HAD TO GET IN FOR REGISTRATION...
THERE WAS A HUGE LINE OUTSIDE OF CITY HALL.
I WAS VERY UPSET TO HEAR THAT
WHO WOULDN'T BE?! ALL PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THESE DAYS IS THEMSELVES! THAT'S PROOF RIGHT THERE!
IT TURNED OUT THAT DEMON-FIGHTING REGIS-TRATIONS WERE THE LOWEST PRIORITY.
Bureaucrat
HERE YOU GO.
BUT IT WAS ACTUALLY FOR TAX RETURNS OR RESIDENCE CERTIFICATES, OR SOMETHING OF THAT SORT.
GYAARGH
SO I WENT AND KILLED THE DEMON WITHOUT CERTI-FICATION.
sklrsh
BUT THEY SAID IT WOULD BE A MONTH BEFORE I WAS OFFI-CIALLY CERTIFIED
AT ANY RATE, I FINALLY MADE IT UP TO THE COUNTER...
HAYA-SHIDA'S THE BAD GUY. YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
HE HATED ME FROM THAT DAY ON.
I'M SORRY.
YOU'VE REALLY DONE IT NOW!
FOR SOME REASON, HAYASHIDA-KUN WAS THEIR RING-LEADER.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, KILLING DEMONS WITH-OUT A LICENSE?
YOU BROKE THE RULES!
THIS ACT ONLY MADE ME THE VICTIM OF PUBLIC OUTRAGE.

NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, MAKE SURE YOU RECEIVE THE NECESSARY APPROVAL AND/OR CERTIFICATIONS FIRST.
HMM. I SUPPOSE THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...
ANYWAY, WHAT ARE YOU TRYIN' TO SAY WITH ALL THIS?
FOR STARTERS, YOU COULD WRITE SOMETHING OUT ON PAPER AND SUBMIT IT TO THE TEACHER
YEAH, BUT HOW **COULD** I GET REGISTERED FOR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
WELL, THAT'S NOT EXACTLY IT, BUT I SUPPOSE IT'S CLOSE ENOUGH.
AH. SO, LIKE, I SHOULD GO GET REGISTERED TO SLEEP IN CLASS?
ALRIGHT! MAN, FOR SOME REASON I'M **PUMPED**!
SO LONG AS YOU CLEARLY EXPRESS **WHY** YOU WANT TO SLEEP, SUCH AS "I GOTTA" OR "I'M BEAT," I'M SURE THEY'LL UNDERSTAND
I'M NOT SURE, BUT YOU NEED TO CONVEY YOUR DESIRE TO SLEEP.
WHAT SHOULD I WRITE?
THE MAN WHO MADE THE MOST FEROCIOUS STUDENT IN CLASS DROP OUT
N-NO WAY!
FOR REAL?
HEY, DID YA HEAR? WATANABE TURNED IN A WITH-DRAWAL FORM!
DEAR MOTHER, SOMETHING NICE HAPPENED YESTERDAY
THE NEXT DAY

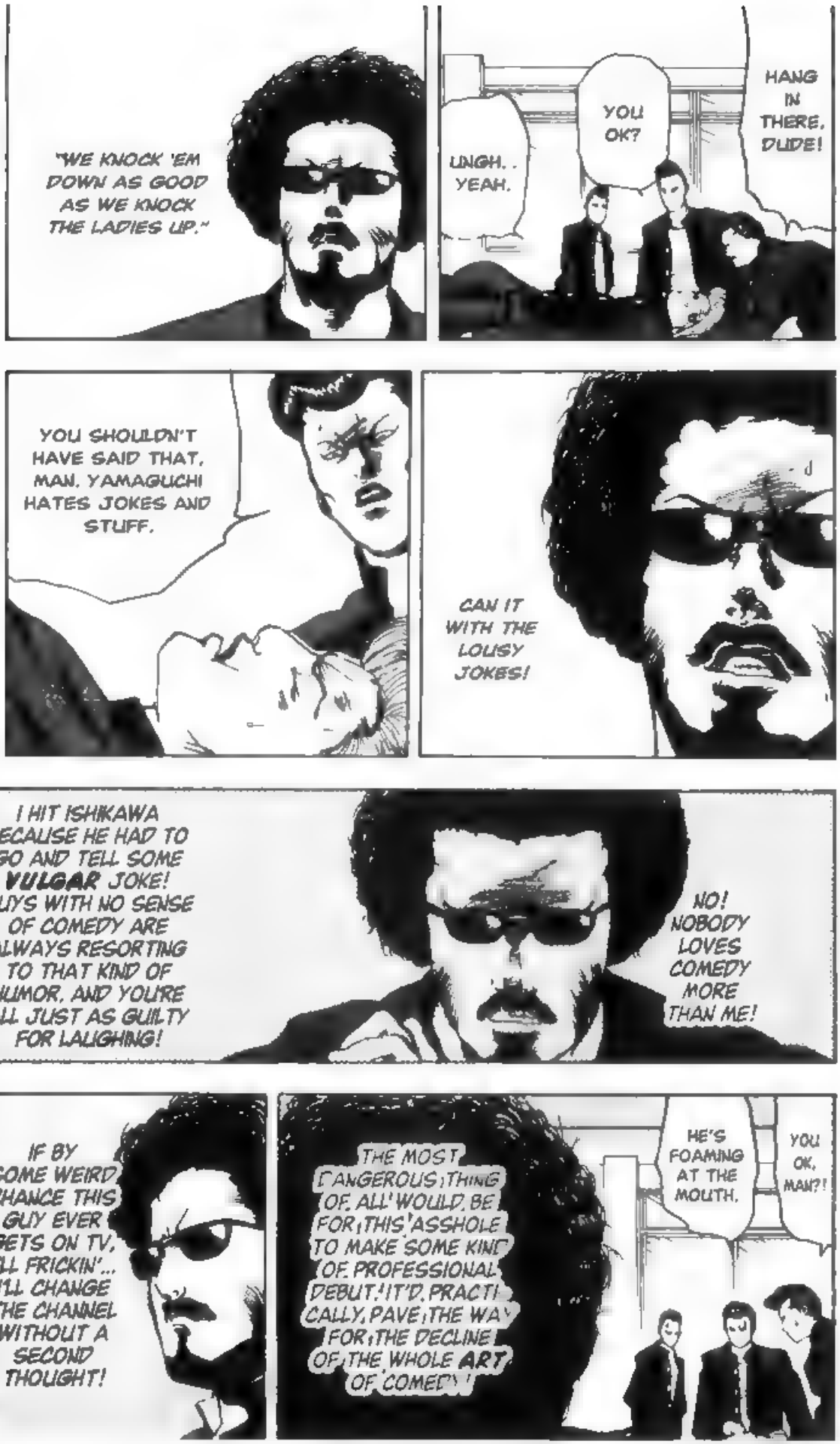
AND HE WASN'T EVEN SUCH A BAD GUY...

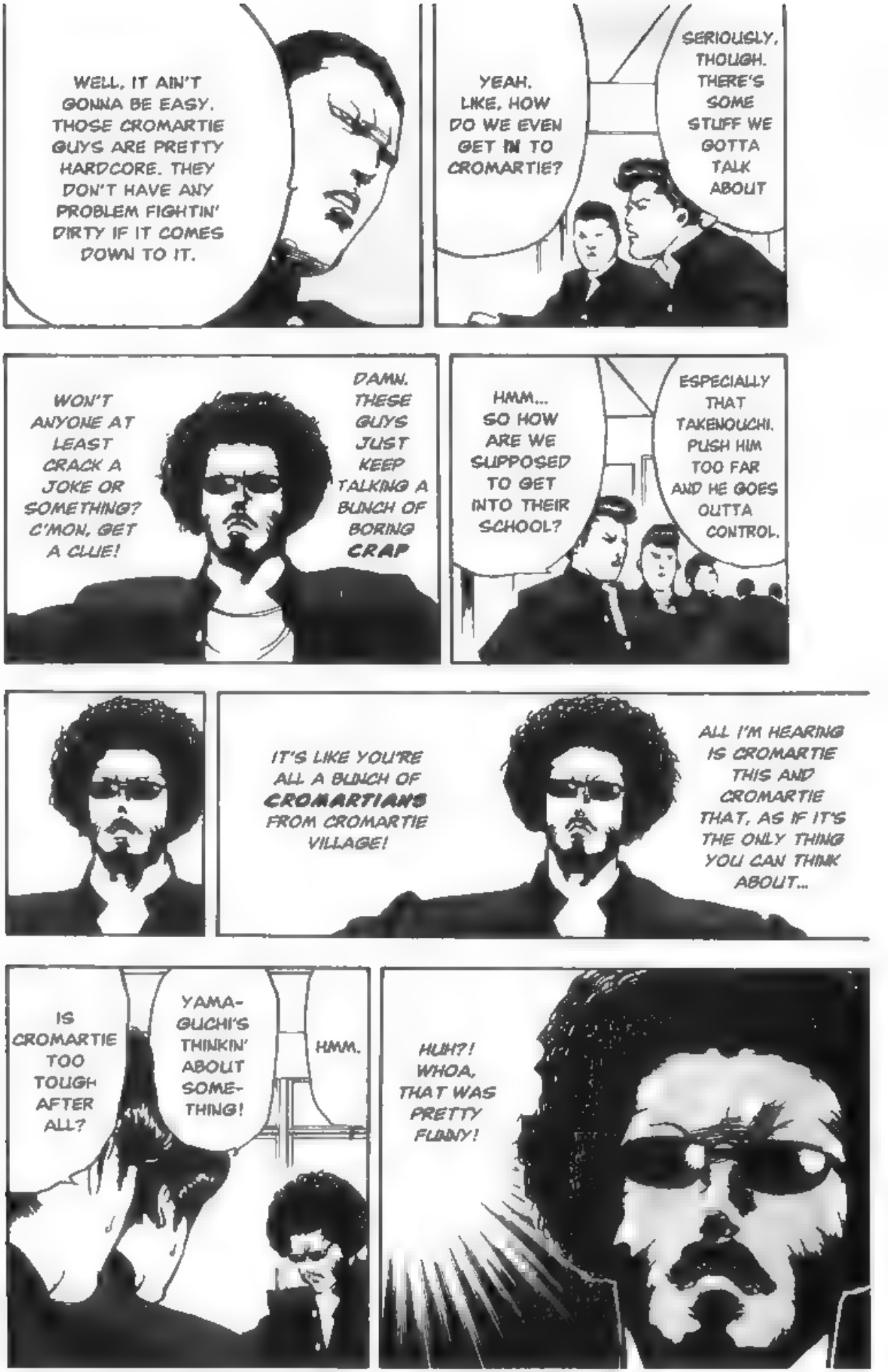
CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE: **SEPTEMBER**


"HOW WILL WE DESTROY CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL?!"
REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH OF THE 1ST YEAR CLASSES ARE GATHERED HERE THE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION
DESTRADE INDUSTRIAL HIGH SCHOOL 1ST YEAR MONTHLY MEETING.

NOT ONLY IS HE AN EXCELLENT FIGHTER HE IS QUITE PASSIONATE ABOUT COMEDY (THOUGH NO ONE ELSE IS AWARE OF THE LATTER)
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI (16)
LAUDED AS INVINCIBLE, DESCRIBED AS SILENT AND UNSINKABLE " YAMAGUCHI IS THE HEAD OF DESTRADE'S 1ST YEAR CLASS HE IS ALSO THE LEADER OF THE BIKE GANG EARTH WIND AND FIRE "

SAKAMOTO... THAT WAS A GOOD ONE!
"UH, WHO'S THIS TAKENOUCHI GUY?"
STILL. IF HE COULD JUST REFINE HIS SKILLS, HE'D DEFINITELY BE THE REAL DEAL (AS A COMEDIAN, THAT IS).
AH, WELL. SUPPOSE HE IS SOME-THING OF AN AIRHEAD."
IT'S JUST SAD YOU DON'T REALIZE YOUR OWN TALENT.
HA HA! C'MON, ISHIKAWA! NOT NOW, MAN!
Gwa ha ha ha!
'CUZ WE KNOCK 'EM DOWN AS GOOD AS WE KNOCK THE LADIES UP!
THE POINT IS, IF THOSE GUYS GET TOO COCKY, IT'S OUR JOB TO KNOCK 'EM DOWN A COUPLE NOTCHES.
BWACK
HUH?
ISHI-KAWA.


"WE KNOCK 'EM DOWN AS GOOD AS WE KNOCK THE LADIES UP."
UNGH. . YEAH.
YOU OK?
HANG IN THERE, DUDE!
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT, MAN. YAMAGUCHI HATES JOKES AND STUFF.
CAN IT WITH THE LOUSY JOKES!
I HIT ISHIKAWA BECAUSE HE HAD TO GO AND TELL SOME VULGAR JOKE! GUYS WITH NO SENSE OF COMEDY ARE ALWAYS RESORTING TO THAT KIND OF HUMOR, AND YOU'RE ALL JUST AS GUILTY FOR LAUGHING!
NO! NOBODY LOVES COMEDY MORE THAN ME!
IF BY SOME WEIRD CHANCE THIS GUY EVER GETS ON TV, I'LL FRICKIN'... I'LL CHANGE THE CHANNEL WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT!
THE MOST DANGEROUS THING OF ALL WOULD BE FOR THIS ASSHOLE TO MAKE SOME KIND OF PROFESSIONAL DEBUT. IT'D, PRACTICALLY, PAVE THE WAY FOR THE DECLINE OF THE WHOLE ART OF COMEDY!
HE'S FOAMING AT THE MOUTH.
YOU OK, MAN?!


WELL, IT AIN'T GONNA BE EASY. THOSE CROMARTIE GUYS ARE PRETTY HARDCORE. THEY DON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM FIGHTIN' DIRTY IF IT COMES DOWN TO IT.
YEAH. LIKE, HOW DO WE EVEN GET IN TO CROMARTIE?
SERIOUSLY, THOUGH. THERE'S SOME STUFF WE GOTTA TALK ABOUT
WON'T ANYONE AT LEAST CRACK A JOKE OR SOMETHING? C'MON, GET A CLUE!
DAMN. THESE GUYS JUST KEEP TALKING A BUNCH OF BORING CRAP
HMM... SO HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET INTO THEIR SCHOOL?
ESPECIALLY THAT TAKENOUCHI. PUSH HIM TOO FAR AND HE GOES OUTTA CONTROL.
IT'S LIKE YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF CROMARTIANS FROM CROMARTIE VILLAGE!
ALL I'M HEARING IS CROMARTIE THIS AND CROMARTIE THAT, AS IF IT'S THE ONLY THING YOU CAN THINK ABOUT...
IS CROMARTIE TOO TOUGH AFTER ALL?
YAMA-GUCHI'S THINKIN' ABOUT SOME-THING!
HMM.
HUH?! WHOA, THAT WAS PRETTY FUNNY!

. . . . . .
STILL, NOW'S MY ONLY CHANCE. IT'LL BE TOO LATE ONCE WE RAID CROMARTIE.
MAN, I'D LOVE TO GET UP AND TELL 'EM THAT JOKE! BUT IF I DID, MY REPUTATION WOULD BE GONE IN A FLASH.
IT WAS A MISTAKE TO LET THAT HAPPEN. THEY'RE SO SCARED OF ME NOT EVEN THIS HAIRSTYLE CAN GET A LAUGH OUT OF THEM!
PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY REASON I'M THIS SCHOOL'S "KINGPIN" IS 'CUZ I CAN FIGHT LIKE NO ONE'S BUSINESS.
THAT SETTLES IT! AS OF TODAY, I QUIT BEING THE BOSS!
I JUST PRAY THE GODS OF COMEDY ARE SMILING ON ME...
OK! I'M GONNA TELL THAT JOKE RIGHT NOW!
WHAT I REALLY WANT TO DO IS TELL LOTS OF GREAT JOKES AND MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH UNTIL THEY CRY!
ALL I'M HEARING IS CROMARTIE THIS AND CROMARTIE THAT, AS IF IT'S THE ONLY THING YOU CAN THINK ABOUT!
YOU'RE ALL TALKIN', BUT YOUR CONVERSATION'S GOING NOWHERE!
HUH?
HEY, WHEN ARE YOU GUYS GONNA QUIT YER BLABBIN'?!

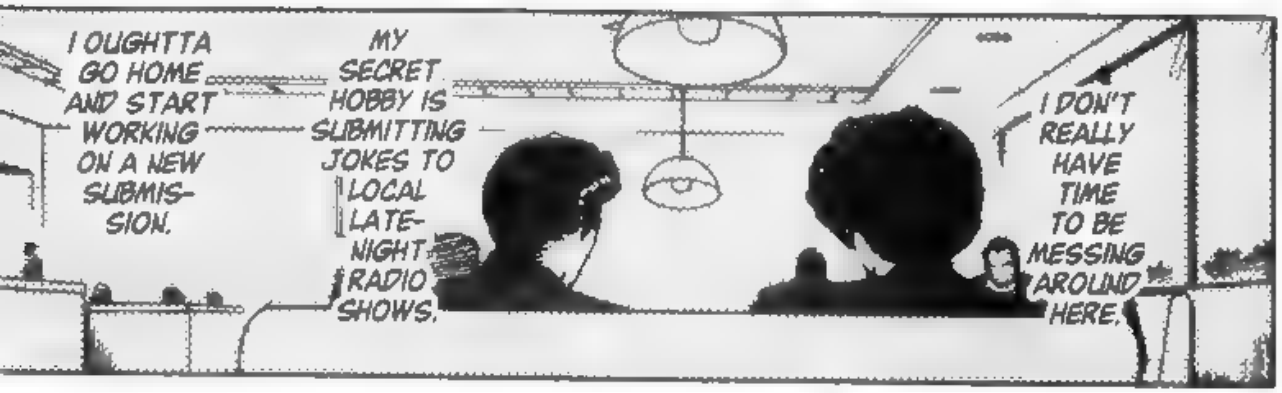
IT'S LIKE YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF CROMARTIANS FROM FRICKIN' CROMARTIE VILLAGE OR SOMETHIN'! BWAHAHA!
HEY, YEAH!
SEE? I TOLD YA YAMAGUCHI HATES JOKES!
WHOA!
CRACK

MUST BE FRUSTRATING.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO. **RADIO GA GA**

THAT'D BE RISKY, SINCE THIS IS THEIR TURF WHAT DOES YAMAGUCHI THINK?
THEN LET'S GET 'EM AND PUT THE PAIN ON 'EM!
CROMARTIE GUYS COME HERE A LOT.

COMMANDING DESTRADE'S 1ST YEARS IS NOBORU YAMAGUCHI HE IS DEEP IN THOUGHT WONDERING F HE COULD OVERCOME THE HEAVY ATMOSPHERE W.TH A BIT OF MIRTH
THE TWO SCHOOLS ARE NOW TRULY ON THE VERGE OF WAR
DESTRADE HIGH HAS FINALLY MADE A MOVE AGAINST CROMARTIE THE DESTRADE GUYS HAVE INFILTRATED CROMARTIE TERRITORY


I OUGHTTA GO HOME AND START WORKING ON A NEW SUBMIS-SION.
MY SECRET HOBBY IS SUBMITTING JOKES TO LOCAL LATE-NIGHT RADIO SHOWS.
I DON'T REALLY HAVE TIME TO BE MESSING AROUND HERE.

THERE ARE A LOT OF LISTENERS WHO LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING MY JOKES. YOU COULD EVEN SAY THAT WITHOUT MY JOKES, THOSE SHOWS WOULD BE DEAD IN THE WATER.
I'M MORE OR LESS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO **SEVEN** DIFFERENT PROGRAMS.

THEY USED FIVE OF MY JOKES LAST NIGHT. I SUBMITTED SEVEN, THOUGH, SO IT'S JUST AVERAGE. BY THE WAY, MY PEN NAME IS SALTY TARO, A COOL NAME IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.
DAMN, MY BLOOD IS BOILING! I'M READY TO RUMBLE!
TO HELL WITH CROMARTIE! I'M GONNA TEAR THAT TAKENOUCHI TO PIECES!
BAM
AND IF THERE'S ONE THING SALTY TARO HATES, IT'S...
THAT DAMNED "HONEY BOY"! HE'S ALWAYS OUTSHINING ME ON THE RADIO SCENE!
HE'S BURNED UP, AND SO AM I!
WHOA, YAMA-GUCHI'S PISSED!
I WON'T REST UNTIL I'VE SUR-PASSED HIM!
HE'S THE ONLY OTHER CONTRIBUTOR WHO HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR I CAN RESPECT.
WHENEVER IT COMES DOWN TO JUST THE TWO OF US, THEY ALWAYS PICK HIS SUBMIS-SIONS BEFORE MINE!

WHERE ARE YOU NOW, HONEY BOY? WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
MUST BE WORRIED ABOUT GOING UP AGAINST CROMARTIE.
HE'S UPSET OVER SOME-THIN'.
MAN, THAT'S DEEP.
SUBMITTING JOKES TO LATE-NIGHT RADIO PROGRAMS HAPPENS TO BE A HOBBY OF MINE
YES. IT CAME TO ME WHEN I WAS IN THE KITCHEN ONE DAY: "HONEY BOY."
SO LIKE, DO YOU HAVE A PEN NAME?
ksplsh

. . . . .
!!

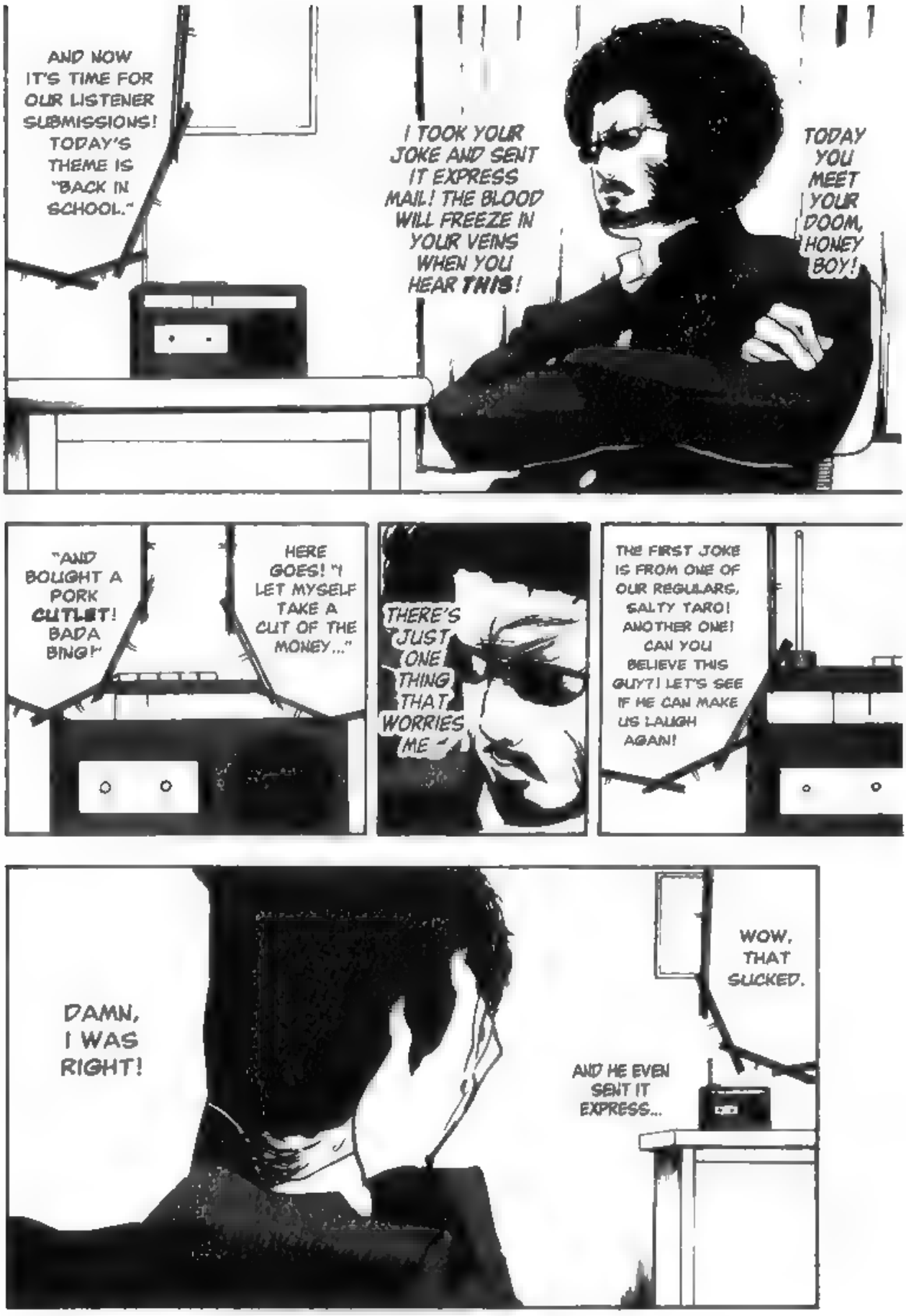
IT'S HONEY BOY! AND HE'S GOING TO TELL AN ESPECIALLY GOOD JOKE

WELL... I CAME UP WITH AN ESPECIALLY GOOD ONE FOR THIS WEEK'S SHOW.
SO WHAT KIND OF STUFF DO YA WRITE? C'MON, TELL ME!

HUH?
SIT DOWN AND SHUT THE HELL UP!

LOOK! THEY'RE WEARING CROMARTIE UNIFORMS!
JEEZ, WHAT'S WITH YAMAGUCHI? THOSE TWO GUYS ARE REALLY GETTIN' TO HIM!

YOU'VE BLOWN IT THIS TIME, HONEY BOY. I'LL BET YOU NEVER EXPECTED SALTY TARO WOULD FIND YOU HERE! IT WAS A ONE-IN-A-MILLION CHANCE, BUT NOW YOUR JOKE IS AS GOOD AS MINE!
WHO THE HELL ARE THEY?
DON'T TELL ME HE'S SCARED OF 'EM!
. . . . . .
whisper
WELL, I'D BE EMBARRASSED IF ANYONE ELSE HEARD, SO I'LL WHISPER IT TO YOU.
TELL IT TO ME STRAIGHT, ALRIGHT?
fwip
AH-HA! SO THAT'S YOU'RE LITTLE GAG, EH?
I DON'T GET IT, MAN! WHAT THE HECK'S HE DOIN'?
IT LOOKS LIKE YAMA-GUCHI'S GOING TOWARD 'EM.
WHAT THE HELL DID WE EVEN COME HERE FOR?!
HUH?! BUT THE FIGHT AIN'T EVEN STARTED YET!
WE'RE OUTTA HERE.


AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR OUR LISTENER SUBMISSIONS! TODAY'S THEME IS "BACK IN SCHOOL."
I TOOK YOUR JOKE AND SENT IT EXPRESS MAIL! THE BLOOD WILL FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS WHEN YOU HEAR THIS!
TODAY YOU MEET YOUR DOOM, HONEY BOY!
"AND BOUGHT A PORK CUTLET! BADA BING!"
HERE GOES! "I LET MYSELF TAKE A CUT OF THE MONEY..."
THERE'S JUST ONE THING THAT WORRIES ME -
THE FIRST JOKE IS FROM ONE OF OUR REGULARS, SALTY TARO! ANOTHER ONE! CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS GUY?! LET'S SEE IF HE CAN MAKE US LAUGH AGAIN!
DAMN, I WAS RIGHT!
WOW, THAT SUCKED.
AND HE EVEN SENT IT EXPRESS...

YOU HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR, BUDDY.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 3

FREDDIE

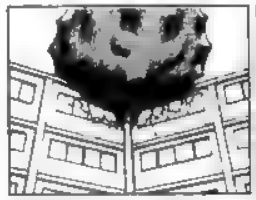
In a way, he and Mechazawa are like the stars of this story His silent demeanor gives him an almost refined air, and has won him hordes of female fans No, I'm being serious. His real name, age, nationality and so on are all unconfirmed The only thing we know for sure is that he has an extremely hairy chest (although in this volume, we'll also learn that he's a hard worker, though this can hardly be considered important) We have yet to see him in a fight, but his ability to scare off opponents by his appearance alone is outstanding. So is he a good fighter or isn't he?! He has a big surprise in store for us this time—later on, we'll be treated to a shocking scene of him walking around wearing nothing but an apron

GORILLA

That's it and that's all There's nothing else I can say I'm supposed to be introducing the men of Cromartie, but he s not even a man. I could go ahead and say things like "His name is Hiromi Go" and "He's actually quite clean," but the more I do, the more doubts I have about my own writing. Hey, why don't *you* try writing a character profile for a gorilla?! It should be obvious he has no catchphrase He's better at arithmetic than Hayashida. . OK, enough already!

New Series!

Love Nona Story Mu Art Nona



THE METEORITE THAT FELL ON CROMARTIE

Bridge collapsed from the impact

METEORITE FALLS ON CROMARTIE!

UFO DESCENDS!

Seventeen years ago, Cromartie High suffered a calamity when a meteorite literally fell on top of it. The rock was approximately eight meters in diameter, a size rarely encountered anywhere in the world, according to experts. There was initial confusion among those present at the time of impact, with some mistakenly believing a local school had declared war by dropping a bomb on campus. The error proved believing because of the fact that damage the scope, burning untainted immediately. No one was harmed. A large number of students report seeing a UFO fly over campus shortly afterward. Based on new data, scientists now believe the unidentified flying meteorite is not to be mistaken for a UFO. Theories are more than student, or should I say, the adults who are psychic was absent from them but this is purely speculation. Incidentally, the UFO we are talking about here is not the

EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY NAME UNKNOWN

Yeah, I was in those aliens. But then they came and they rushed off before I could even tell them my name. I gave 'em a pamphlet now my chance. My name is

EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY. TAKASHI NAMIYAMA (CLASS 1-2)

"No, I'm serious. There was a meteorite and a UFO! The aliens used a rope ladder to climb down. Then they took Freddie away. It was terrible. Wait, listen to me! I'm not kidding!"

INTERVIEW WITH MANGA AUTHOR EIJI NONAKA

CG: It's nice to meet you.

Nonaka: Nice to meet you too.

CG: What kind of food do you like?

Nonaka: Hmm... Broccoli, I guess.

CG: I see. So, do you like manga?

Nonaka: Hmm... Not so much, I think.

CG: Really? Well, thanks for your time.

Nonaka: My pleasure.

Congratulations on the publication of your newest graphic novel!

The MANGA by a MANLY MAN for MANLY MEN!!

But, THIS is NOT the place to learn ALL about being a MANLY MAN!!

"[illegible] Vols. 1-2

ON SALE NOW!!

Pick up your OWN copy of this BRIGHT and CHEERFUL manga NOW!

Hello, Cromartie!

The Macho Manly Mechazawa

Today's "Hello Cromartie" profile is Shinichi Mechazawa from 1-A. His extraordinary toughness and loyalty to his friends have made him the star of his class. With an ultra tough body that can withstand the most brutal attacks and strength that belies his diminutive stature, Mechazawa-kun is full of surprises. He shyly admits, "They say I'm like a million horsepower tank." Lately, Mechazawa's dream has been to take a break from the fighting and go relax at his beloved hot springs. "Damn, I just wanna take a crap and wash away my troubles," says Mechazawa-kun. We hope your wish comes true soon.

A WORD WITH TAKENOUCHI-KUN (CLASS 1-2)

"Sure, Destrade was even a decent opponent for a fight... say, bring it on! But if we gotta go to there, we're walking, yo! It's Wasabi! Anything besides walking is not an option! Aside from that, I don't really care. Bring it on!"

Hostilities Escalate Between Cromartie, Rivals

Will Cromartie's Legendary "Invincibility" Weather the Storm?

Tensions are high this week as hostilities erupted between Cromartie and longtime rivals Bass High School and Destrade Industrial High School. Conflicts between 1st year students of the three schools are ongoing, and with the recent escalation in hostilities, the situation is nobody's idea of a war.

JACKSON SETOUCHI, LEADER OF BASS HIGH'S 1ST YEARS

"So what if they are aliens. Who can be afraid of them?!"

NOBORU YAMAGUCHI, LEADER OF DESTRADE HIGH'S 1ST YEARS

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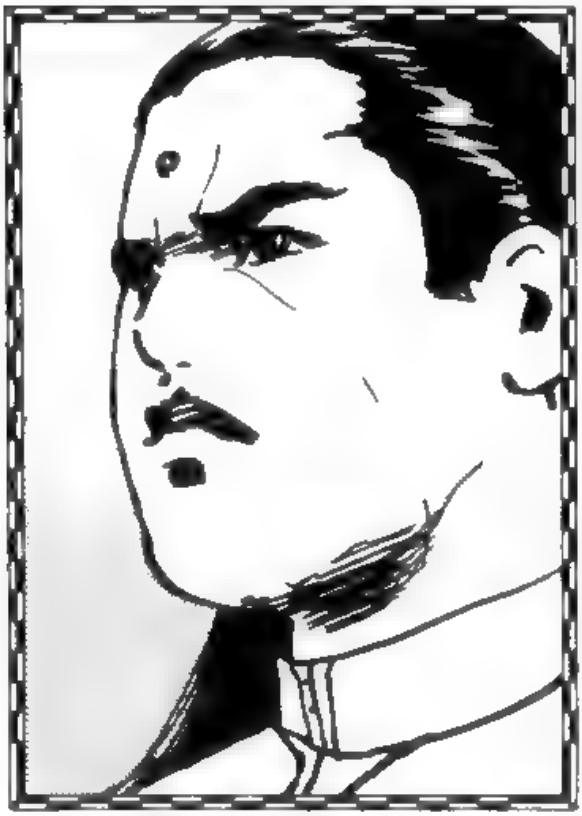
CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 4



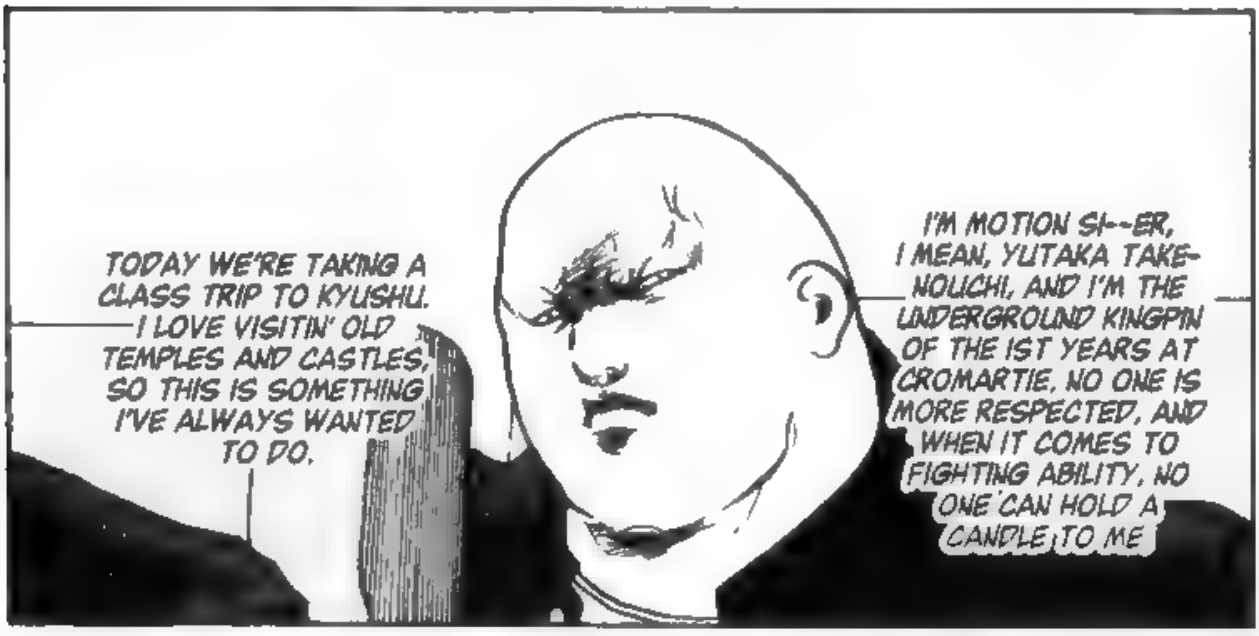
TAKESHI HOKUTO

Son in one of Japan's powerful *zaibatsu* families. His long hair and white school uniform are a bit over the top. Putting his Sovereignty Studies (whatever that is) to good use, he had planned to take over high schools throughout Japan, but this foolish aristocrat mistakenly transferred to Cromartie. "So why not transfer the hell out?" you may heckle. But Hokuto shows no signs of leaving anytime soon. Perhaps he's found his comfort zone, surrounded by all these idiots. It's still not clear if he really is rich or not. His prideful and pompous attitude has won him few friends. His catchphrase is, "The masses are pigs." Now that's going too far.

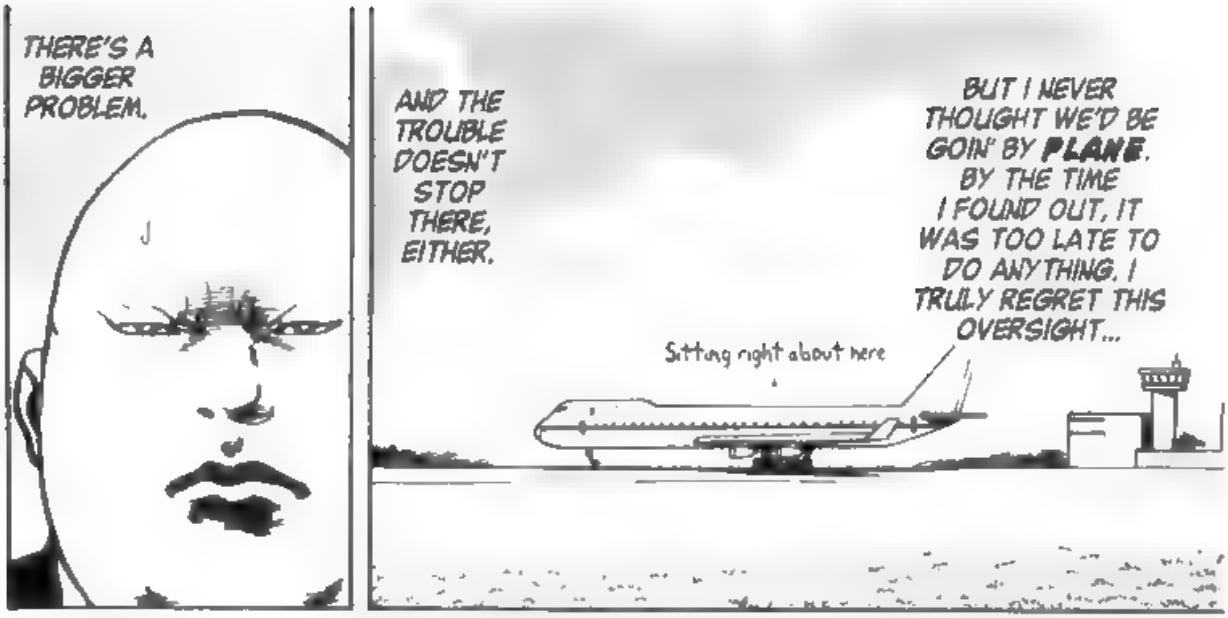
HOKUTO'S HENCHMAN

The serialized version of *Cromartie High School* is approaching its one-year anniversary, and this guy has still not been able to tell anyone his real name. His undying loyalty to Hokuto is enough to bring tears to your eyes. This dutiful (stupid, that is) fellow behaves as if Hokuto were his master, even though the two are in the same grade. His pet phrase, "Please be careful, Hokuto-san, sir," reveals this deferring nature. Compared to the other characters in this manga, he's sorely lacking in the personality department, but this actually makes him easier to fit into the story (which is why he shows up so often). He has few fans despite his great efforts to please. It's 'cuz he's got no presence!

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE: **SKY HIGH**


TODAY WE'RE TAKING A CLASS TRIP TO KYUSHU. I LOVE VISITIN' OLD TEMPLES AND CASTLES, SO THIS IS SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO.
I'M MOTION SI--ER, I MEAN, YUTAKA TAKENOUCHI, AND I'M THE UNDERGROUND KINGPIN OF THE 1ST YEARS AT CROMARTIE. NO ONE IS MORE RESPECTED, AND WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING ABILITY, NO ONE CAN HOLD A CANDLE TO ME

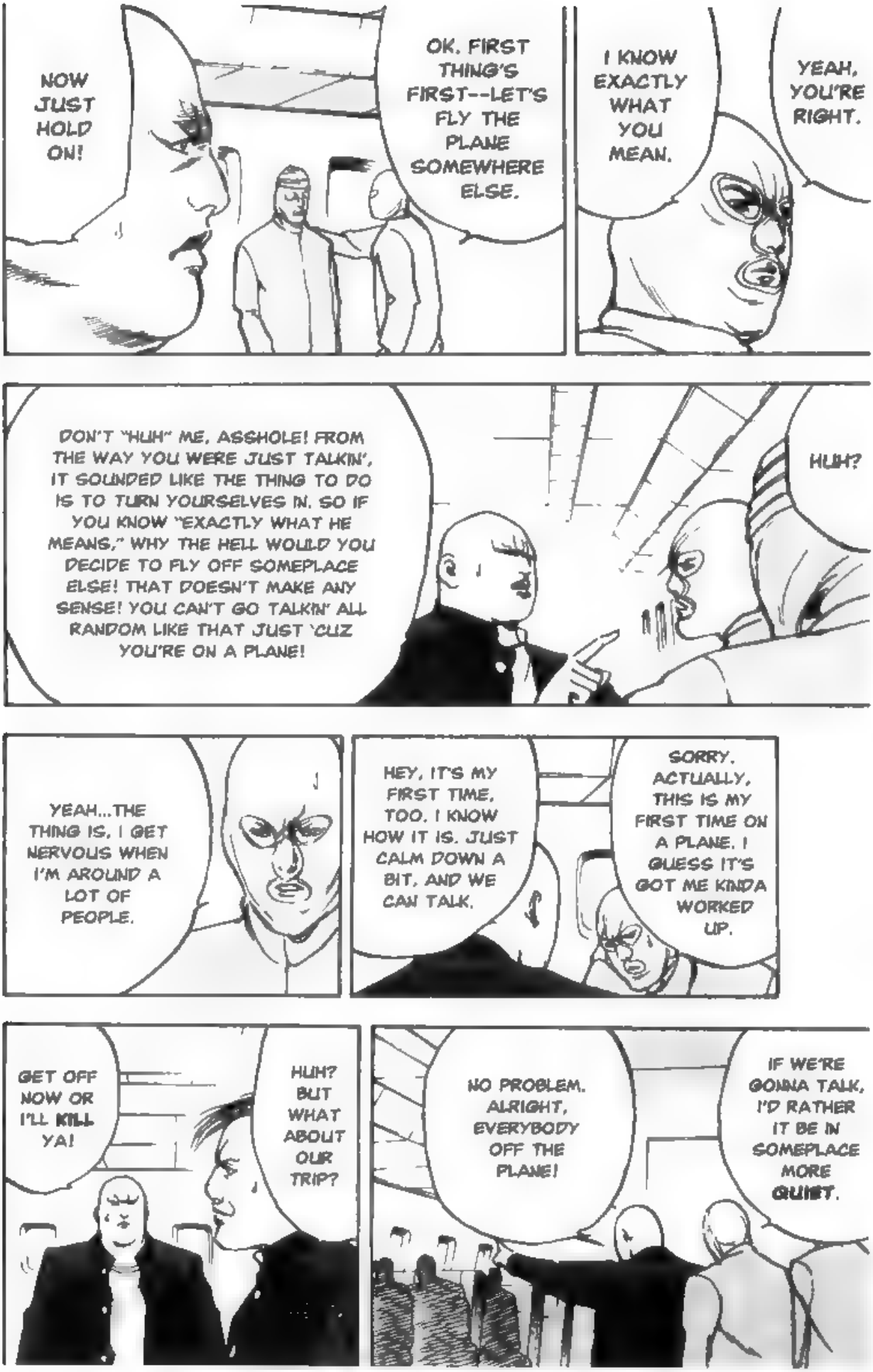
I'VE BEEN TRAINING IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY, DOIN' STUFF LIKE SITTING INSIDE PARKED CARS AND HANGING AROUND THE RAILWAY STATIONS, WATCHING THE BULLET TRAINS RACE BY. AND IT ALL WENT PERFECTLY, WITHOUT A SINGLE MISHAP.
BUT IF I WANT TO GO ON TRIPS, I'VE GOTTA OVERCOME MY SINGLE WEAKNESS: **MOTION SICKNESS.**


THERE'S A BIGGER PROBLEM.
AND THE TROUBLE DOESN'T STOP THERE, EITHER.
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D BE GOIN' BY PLANE. BY THE TIME I FOUND OUT, IT WAS TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING. I TRULY REGRET THIS OVERSIGHT...
Sitting right about here

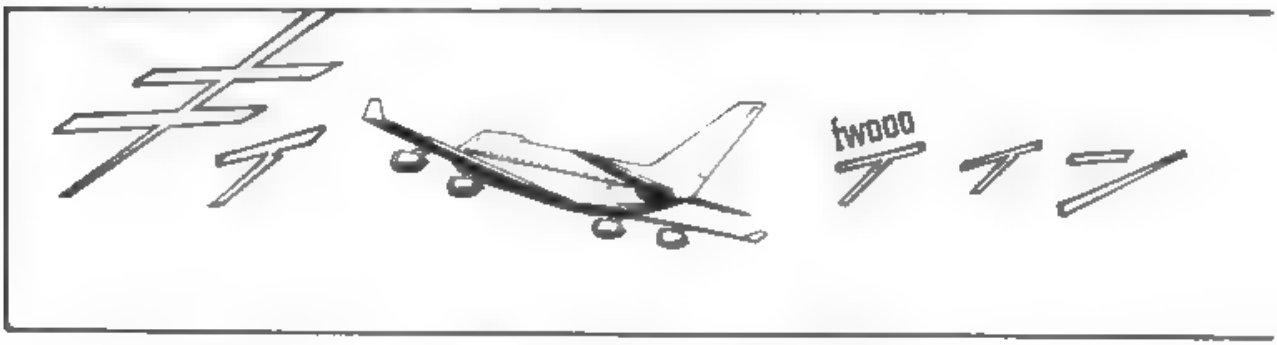
ALRIGHT, DON'T ANYONE MOVE!
WE'VE BEEN HIJACKED.

I'M DYING TO SEE KYUSHU, BUT GETTIN' ON A PLANE IS JUST... WELL, IT'S MORE THAN I CAN HANDLE. I HAVEN'T EVEN MASTERED TRAINS OR TAXIS YET, SO THE SKY IS OUTTA THE QUESTION. IT'S LIKE A HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL PLAYER STEPPIN' UP TO BAT IN THE MAJOR LEAGUE.
STILL, IT COULDA BEEN WORSE. AT LEAST WITH THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE NOW, WE CAN'T TAKE OFF. THAT MEANS THEY'LL HAVE TO PUT OUR SCHOOL TRIP ON HOLD.

HM?
HEY, BOSS. I DUNNO IF WE CAN PULL THIS OFF...
AH, WELL. THIS HIJACKING THING ISN'T GONNA WORK, ANYWAY. WE WON'T TAKE OFF, AND THIS'LL BE OVER WITHOUT A LOT OF FUSS.
YEAH. IT FEELS KINDA LIKE WE'RE THE HOSTAGES.
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST GONNA BE SOME KIDS ON A SCHOOL TRIP, BUT THESE GUYS LOOK MORE LIKE YAKUZA!
ISN'T IT A LITTLE EARLY TO BE THROWIN' IN THE TOWEL?!
MAN, LET'S JUST TURN OURSELVES IN. NOBODY'S BEEN HURT, SO IT WON'T BE TOO BAD.
I CAN'T MAKE THIS DRAG ON LONGER, EITHER. I MAY BE BAD, BUT I AIN'T SO LOW THAT I'D HELP OUT A BUNCH OF CRIMINALS! NO... IT'S MY CIVIC DUTY TO TRY TO GET THESE GUYS TO SURRENDER.
UH-OH. IF THIS THING IS TAKEN CARE OF TOO QUICKLY, WE MIGHT END UP GOING ON THE TRIP AFTER ALL. BUT THEY WOULDN'T LET US GO RIGHT AFTER BEING HIJACKED, WOULD THEY? THEN AGAIN, I WOULDN'T PUT IT PAST OUR SCHOOL...


NOW JUST HOLD ON!
OK. FIRST THING'S FIRST--LET'S FLY THE PLANE SOMEWHERE ELSE.
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN.
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
DON'T "HUH" ME, ASSHOLE! FROM THE WAY YOU WERE JUST TALKIN', IT SOUNDED LIKE THE THING TO DO IS TO TURN YOURSELVES IN. SO IF YOU KNOW "EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANS," WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU DECIDE TO FLY OFF SOMEPLACE ELSE! THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE! YOU CAN'T GO TALKIN' ALL RANDOM LIKE THAT JUST 'CUZ YOU'RE ON A PLANE!
HUH?
YEAH...THE THING IS, I GET NERVOUS WHEN I'M AROUND A LOT OF PEOPLE.
HEY, IT'S MY FIRST TIME, TOO. I KNOW HOW IT IS. JUST CALM DOWN A BIT, AND WE CAN TALK.
SORRY. ACTUALLY, THIS IS MY FIRST TIME ON A PLANE. I GUESS IT'S GOT ME KINDA WORKED UP.
GET OFF NOW OR I'LL KILL YA!
HUH? BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR TRIP?
NO PROBLEM. ALRIGHT, EVERYBODY OFF THE PLANE!
IF WE'RE GONNA TALK, I'D RATHER IT BE IN SOMEPLACE MORE QUIET.

Why the heck didn't I get off, too?
WELL, UH, I'M GLAD YOU FEEL BETTER.
YEAH, YOU'RE PRETTY SHY AROUND STRANGERS, BOSS.
AHH, I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW THAT THEY'RE GONE.
THE ONLY ONES ONBOARD NOW ARE THE TWO HIJACKERS, THE CREW, AND ONE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT!
THEY'VE RELEASED ALMOST ALL THE HOSTAGES!
YEAH, NO KIDDING! I FEEL, LIKE, INVINCIBLE WHEN I LISTEN TO THIS GUY. DAMN, I DON'T EVEN WANT TO GIVE UP ANYMORE!
HUH?
FOR SOME REASON, I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WITH YOU AROUND.
Now I'M the boss?
UH, G-GIMME A MINUTE.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW, BOSS?! WE'RE READY TO GO!
THEY'RE EVEN LOOKING TO ME FOR GUIDANCE! HOW THE HELL DID THIS HAPPEN?
OH, CRAP. NOW IT LOOKS LIKE I'M IN CAHOOTS WITH 'EM.
GOOD. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE A HELL OF A TIME TRYING TO HONOR SUCH A NUTTY DEMAND. THAT'LL BUY THE COPS PLENTY OF TIME TO MOVE IN, AND THEN I CAN GET OFF OF THIS PLANE.
RIGHT! WE'LL DEMAND LIKE 20 BILLION AND HAVE 'EM FLY US TO AMERICA OR SOMETHING!
OH, I GET IT!
OK! THE NEXT STEP IS TO MAKE SOME KINDA CRAZY, UNREASONABLE DEMAND!

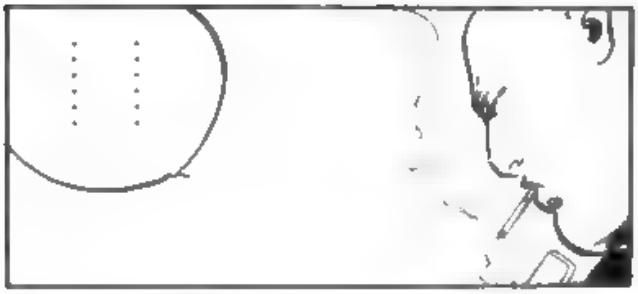


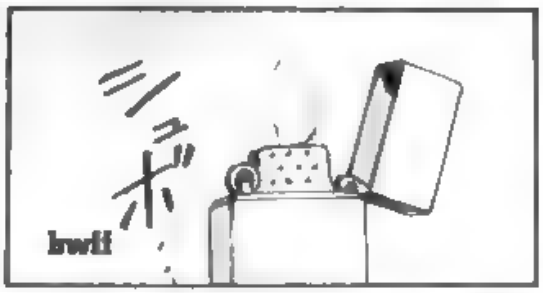
NOT ONLY AM I MOTION SICK, BUT I'M STILL BEING HELD HOSTAGE, AND IT'S MY FAULT THESE HIJACKERS JUST MADE OFF WITH 20 BILLION YEN!
OH GOD, I FEEL SO BAD...

* About $...million

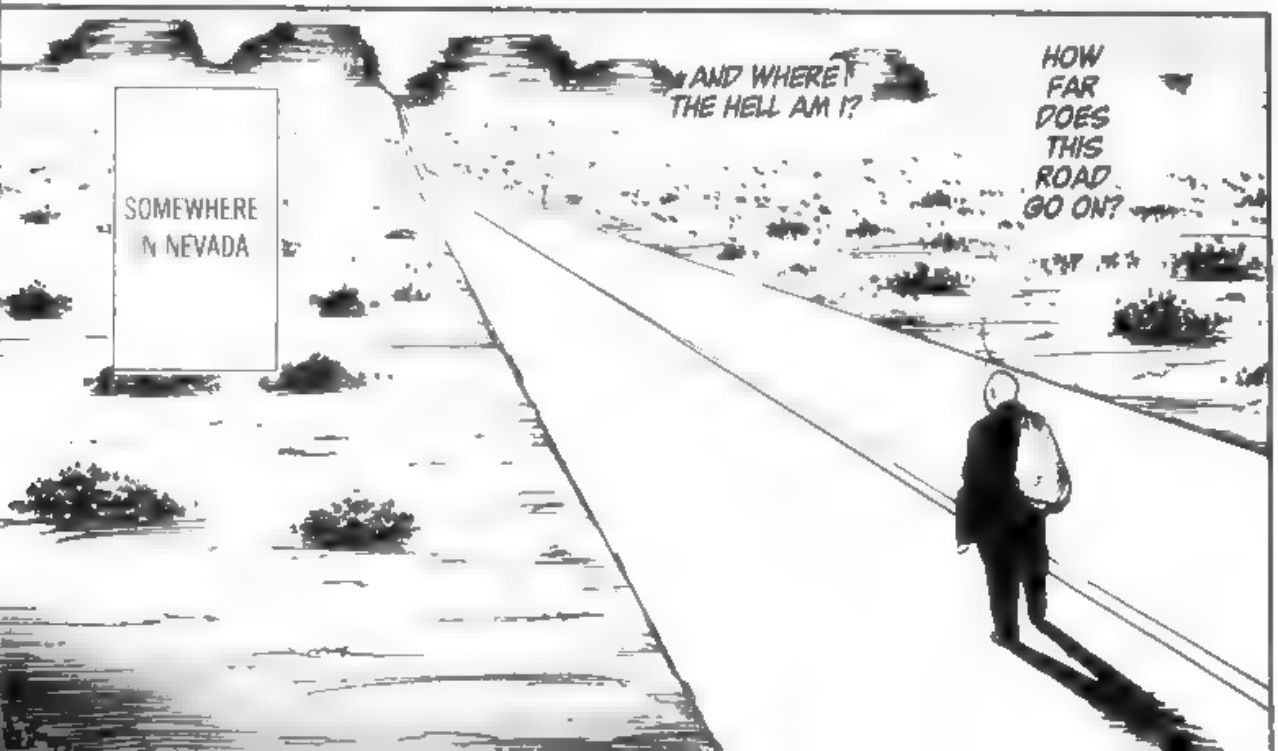
TAKE OFF THOSE MASKS ALREADY!

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR: **LIVING IN AMERICA**



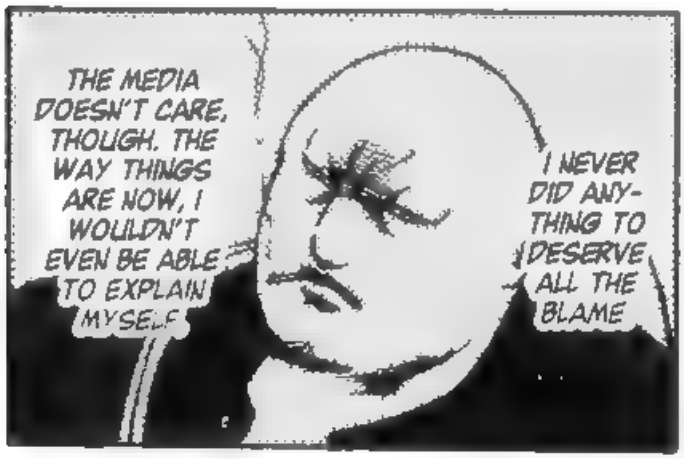


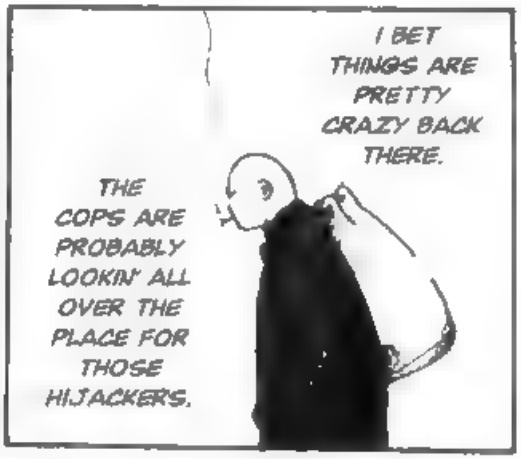
MY ONLY WEAKNESS IS THAT I GET MOTION SICK REAL EASY. ANYHOW, I'M DAMN TOUGH, AND THERE'S THIS SCHOOL I WAS THE BOSS OF... BUT THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME NOW.
NOT THAT IT MATTERS RIGHT NOW, BUT MY NAME IS YUTAKA TAKENOUCHI. NO ONE IS MORE RESPECTED, AND WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING ABILITY, NO ONE CAN HOLD A CANDLE TO ME.



I'VE BEEN ON THE RUN FOR A WHILE NOW. I THOUGHT ABOUT CONTACTING THE JAPANESE EMBASSY AND HAVING 'EM CLEAR UP THIS MISUNDERSTANDING SO I COULD GO HOME... BUT THE THING IS, I DON'T EVER WANT TO GET ON A PLANE AGAIN.
I WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME AND GOT MISTAKEN AS A HIJACKER. FORTUNATELY, I WAS ABLE TO GET AWAY.

I'VE BEEN GETTING SOFT, LIVING THE EASY LIFE OF A KINGPIN. BUT NOW THAT I'M HERE IN AMERICA, I'LL USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN MY MIND AND BODY, SO THAT I CAN HANDLE RIDING IN VEHICLES, NO SWEAT. ONCE I'VE TOUGHENED MYSELF UP, I'LL GO HOME BADDER THAN EVER!
WHO KNOWS, MAYBE THIS IS SOME KIND OF "TEST" I'VE BEEN GIVEN.

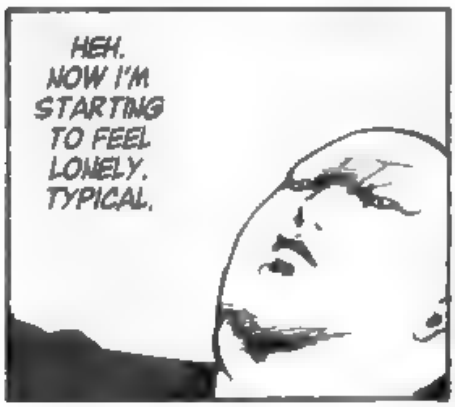

THE MEDIA DOESN'T CARE, THOUGH. THE WAY THINGS ARE NOW, I WOULDN'T EVEN BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN MYSELF.
I NEVER DID ANYTHING TO DESERVE ALL THE BLAME


I BET THINGS ARE PRETTY CRAZY BACK THERE.
THE COPS ARE PROBABLY LOOKIN' ALL OVER THE PLACE FOR THOSE HIJACKERS.

BUT I'LL CONTINUE ON, IN THE HOPE THAT ONE DAY THEY'LL ALL KNOW THE TRUTH. HMM. I WONDER WHY A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LIKE ME IS THINKING ALL THIS STUFF...
THAT'S HOW SOCIETY IS. IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT THE PUBLIC AT LARGE, AND TO HELL WITH THE INDIVIDUAL.

SOUNDS LIKE LAST WEEK WAS PRETTY ROUGH FOR YOU GUYS. IT'S TOO BAD THE PLANE WAS HIJACKED WHEN YOU WERE ABOUT TO SET OFF ON YOUR CLASS TRIP.
JAPAN
WELL, LUCKILY NOBODY WAS HURT.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, SINCE I WAS OUT WITH A COLD THAT DAY.
I WAS THINKING THE SAME THING, EVEN THOUGH I WASN'T THERE WITH YOU.
HEY, IS IT JUST ME OR DO ANY OF YOU FEEL LIKE WE'VE FORGOTTEN SOMETHIN'?
THERE HASN'T BEEN A THING ABOUT IT ON THE NEWS. I SUPPOSE THAT MEANS THE STORY HAS GARNERED NO INTEREST
DID THEY EVER GET THE HIJACKERS?
HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT!
WE NEVER GOT OUR MONEY BACK FOR THE TRIP!
THAT'S IT!

THEY'RE PROBABLY ALL TALKIN' ABOUT ME AT SCHOOL RIGHT NOW.
NEVADA (8 00 PM)

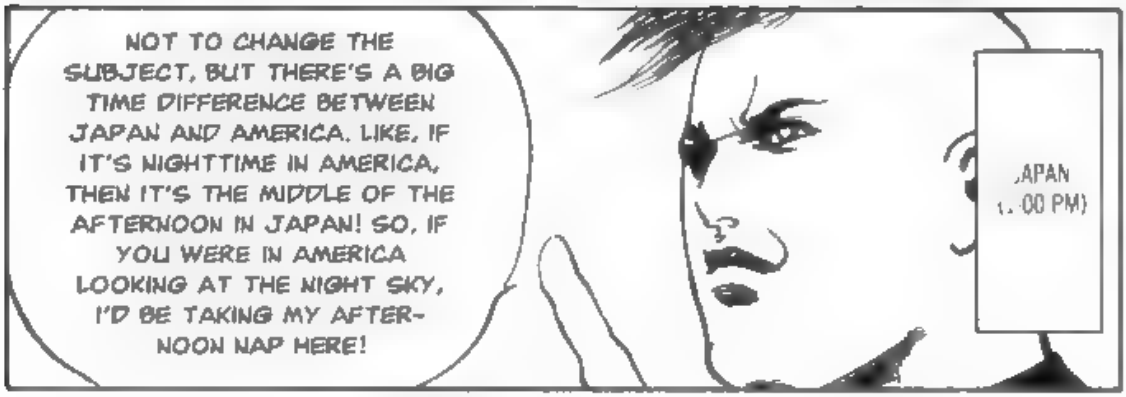

HEH. NOW I'M STARTING TO FEEL LONELY. TYPICAL.

I THINK I'LL JUST CAMP HERE FOR THE NIGHT.
I'M SO TIRED I CAN'T TAKE ANOTHER STEP.

I WONDER IF THOSE HIJACKERS WERE ABLE TO MAKE A CLEAN GETAWAY. THIS IS ALL THEIR FAULT, BUT FOR SOME REASON I CAN'T REALLY HOLD IT AGAINST THEM.

THE STARS SURE ARE BEAUTIFUL

DAMN, THIS AIN'T LIKE ME GETTIN' ALL SENTIMENTAL AND CRAP
I WONDER IF MY FRIENDS BACK IN JAPAN ARE LOOKING AT THESE SAME STARS RIGHT NOW


NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT THERE'S A BIG TIME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JAPAN AND AMERICA. LIKE, IF IT'S NIGHTTIME IN AMERICA, THEN IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE AFTERNOON IN JAPAN! SO, IF YOU WERE IN AMERICA LOOKING AT THE NIGHT SKY, I'D BE TAKING MY AFTER-NOON NAP HERE!
JAPAN (1:00 PM)

LOOK, WHAT I WANNA KNOW IS WHETHER WE'RE GETTIN' OUR DAMN MONEY FOR THE TRIP BACK OR NOT!
BEATS ME. GUESS I JUST WANTED TO SHOW THAT I KNOW A THING OR TWO 'BOUT ASTRONOMY
AND WHO DOESN'T KNOW THAT?
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

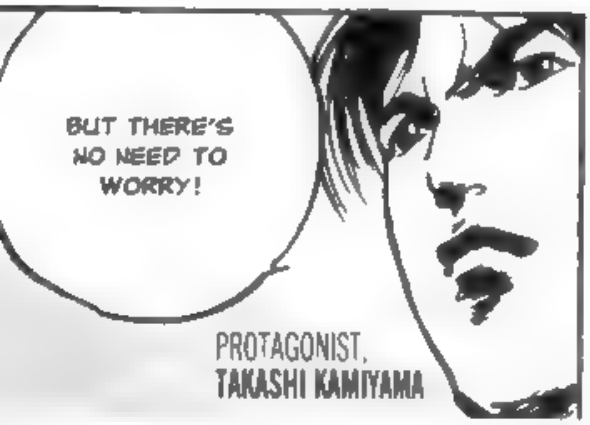
WHO'S "THEY"? THE HIJACKERS?
ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY STOPPED THE TRIP ON US, SO WE SHOULD GET A FULL REFUND!
YOU JUST SKIPPED SCHOOL 'CUZ YOU FELT LIKE IT, YA FREAK! YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY YOU GOT THAT MUCH BACK!
I WAS OUT SICK THAT DAY, AND HAD TO CANCEL ON SHORT NOTICE. I WAS ONLY REFUNDED HALF OF MY FARE...

HMM. WHAT ELSE COULD WE HAVE FORGOTTEN ABOUT?
WELL, OTHER THAN US GETTIN' SHAFTED ON THE FARE, IT FEELS LIKE THERE'S SOMETHIN' **ELSE** WE FORGOT.
WHAT?
HEY, CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THIN'?
THERE'S SOME-THING I'D **REALLY** LIKE TO POINT OUT RIGHT NOW, BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD...
NOPE, EVERYTHING SEEMS NORMAL TO ME.
DO **YOU** HAVE ANY IDEA, TAKENOUCHI-KUN?

AND HIS NAME SHALL BE MASKED TAKENOUCHI.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE. **LET IT BE**

THEY'RE THE ONES PICKIN' A FIGHT, SO THEY MUST BE READY FOR US. IT COULD END UP BEING ONE HELL OF A LONG BRAWL.
YEAH, BUT THOSE GUYS ARE TOUGH. IF WE GO THERE, WE BETTER MAKE SURE WE KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING.

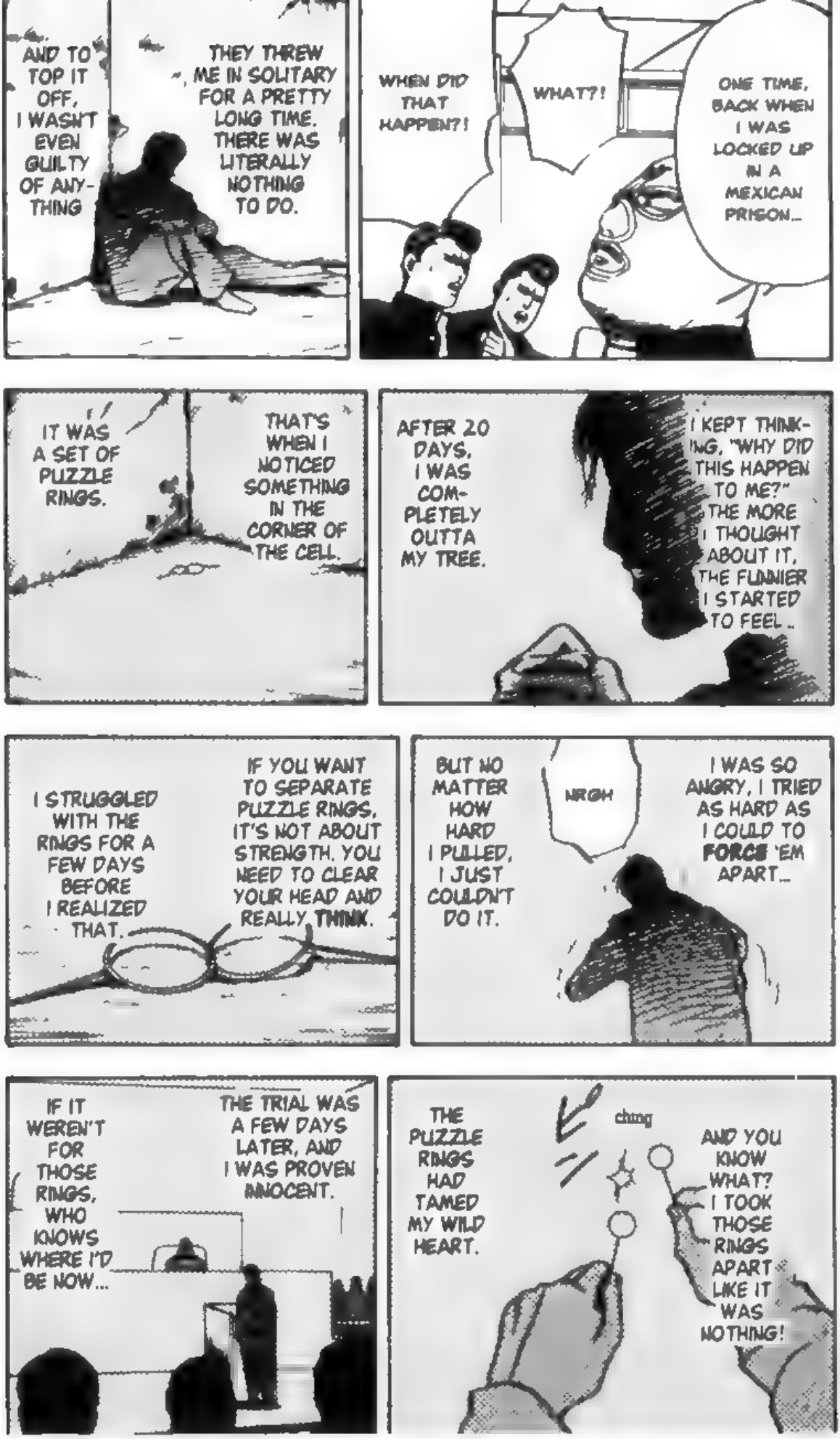


YEAH! WE GOT TAKENOUCHI! TELL US WHAT TO DO, MAN!
YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT!
WE HAVE TAKENOUCHI-KUN ON OUR SIDE!
MASKED TAKENOUCHI
(ACTUALLY ONE OF THE HIJACKERS)

BUT HOW COULD I HAVE KNOWN THAT TAKENOUCHI WAS THE TOUGHEST BADASS OF THEM ALL?! WELL, I GOTTA THINK OF SOMETHING TO SAY TO THEM. I'M REALLY SHY AROUND PEOPLE, BUT I CAN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW!
IT'S KINDA SCARY NO ONE NOTICED
CRAP. I GET THE FEELING I'M IN OVER MY HEAD. I ONLY PRETENDED I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL SO I COULD AVOID GETTING ARRESTED...

WE'RE ALL ON THE VERGE OF ADULTHOOD, RIGHT? WELL, WHAT'S WRONG WITH **ACTING** LIKE IT?
WHOA, HOLD ON A SECOND!
HOW MANY GUYS WILL YA KILL THIS TIME?

AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT WORRIES ME THE MOST--THE COPS! I MEAN, IF WE RUN INTO TROUBLE WITH THEM OVER SOME STUPID FIGHT...WELL, IT AIN'T NO LAUGHING MATTER!
I'M SAYING, WE'RE A LITTLE OLD FOR FIGHTING. WE SHOULD TRY ACTING MORE, YOU KNOW, ADULT
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SAYIN'?
I CAN'T TELL YOU WHY, BUT LET'S JUST SAY IF THEY CATCH ME NOW, I'D PROBABLY GET 20 YEARS.
YOU GUYS JUST DON'T GET IT. IF YOU GOT IN TROUBLE WITH THE COPS, IT'D BE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT STORY THAN IF I DID.
BUT IF WE LET THAT SCARE US, WE WON'T GET TO FIGHT!
WE'RE ALL AFRAID OF THE COPS, MAN.
YOU GUYS ARE STILL YOUNG. YOU HAVE FUTURES... I DON'T WANT TO LEAD YOU DOWN THE SAME LOUSY PATH I'M ON!
RIGHT. SO I CAN'T JUST GO RUNNING INTO FIGHTS.
MAN, YOU ARE ON A DIFFERENT LEVEL!
YOU MUST HAVE A HELL OF A RECORD FOR A 16-YEAR-OLD!
BUT IF WE GAVE UP FIGHTING, THERE'D BE NOTHING LEFT FOR US! WHAT WOULD WE DO THEN?!
PEOPLE CHANGE. THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS.
HE ANOTHER PERSON?
YEAH! YOU'RE LIKE ANOTHER PERSON!
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S IN HIS 30S.
DAMN, DUDE! YOU'VE REALLY CHANGED.

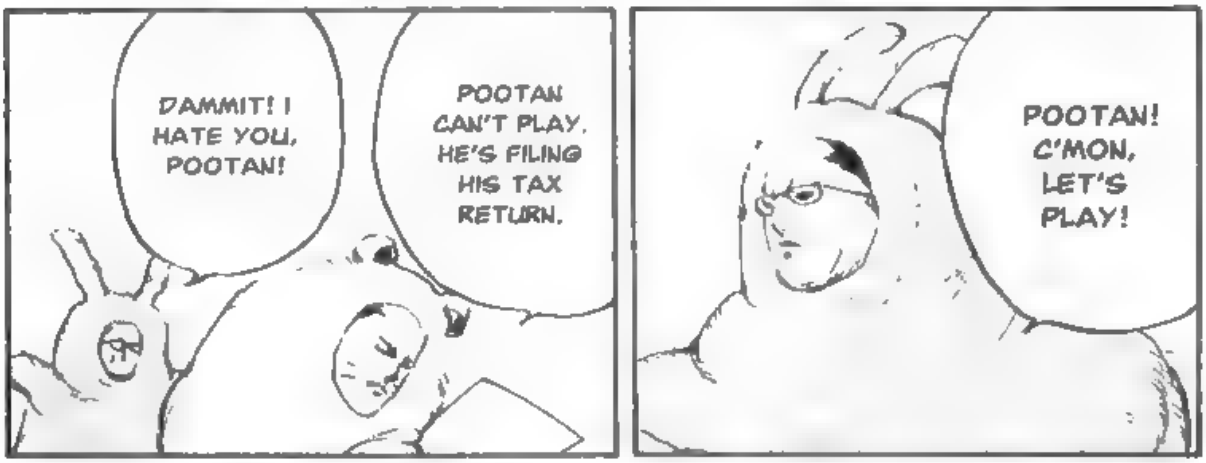

AND TO TOP IT OFF, I WASN'T EVEN GUILTY OF ANY-THING
THEY THREW ME IN SOLITARY FOR A PRETTY LONG TIME. THERE WAS LITERALLY NOTHING TO DO.
WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN?!
WHAT?!
ONE TIME, BACK WHEN I WAS LOCKED UP IN A MEXICAN PRISON...
IT WAS A SET OF PUZZLE RINGS.
THAT'S WHEN I NOTICED SOMETHING IN THE CORNER OF THE CELL.
AFTER 20 DAYS, I WAS COM-PLETELY OUTTA MY TREE.
I KEPT THINK-ING, "WHY DID THIS HAPPEN TO ME?" THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE FUNNIER I STARTED TO FEEL..
I STRUGGLED WITH THE RINGS FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE I REALIZED THAT.
IF YOU WANT TO SEPARATE PUZZLE RINGS, IT'S NOT ABOUT STRENGTH. YOU NEED TO CLEAR YOUR HEAD AND REALLY THINK.
BUT NO MATTER HOW HARD I PULLED, I JUST COULDN'T DO IT.
NRGH
I WAS SO ANGRY, I TRIED AS HARD AS I COULD TO FORCE 'EM APART...
IF IT WEREN'T FOR THOSE RINGS, WHO KNOWS WHERE I'D BE NOW...
THE TRIAL WAS A FEW DAYS LATER, AND I WAS PROVEN INNOCENT.
THE PUZZLE RINGS HAD TAMED MY WILD HEART.
ching
AND YOU KNOW WHAT? I TOOK THOSE RINGS APART LIKE IT WAS NOTHING!

WHOA!
THESE ARE THOSE VERY RINGS.
.....
HEH HEH. YOU WON'T GET IT. NOT NOW, AT LEAST.
LET ME TRY.
NO GOOD.
RARGH!
RRNGH... THEY WON'T BUDGE!
THINK YOU CAN DO IT?
YOU'LL NEVER SEPARATE THOSE RINGS UNLESS YOU CAN COMPOSE YOURSELF AND CLEAR YOUR MIND.
ALL YOU DO IS FIGHT, DAY IN AND DAY OUT. YOU THINK LIKE A PACK OF WILD ANIMALS.
HOW ABOUT THAT. I NEVER THOUGHT THERE'D BE A SANE GUY AMONG YOU BEASTS.
HEY, HE DID IT!
ching

YEAH...BUT THEY'RE ALWAYS COMING OVER TO MY PLACE, EVEN WHEN THEY'RE NOT INVITED. MAYBE THEY'VE JUST BEEN HARASSING ME ALL ALONG...
DUDE, NOBODY **EVER** COMES TO HELP YOU. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS?

THE GORILLA'S NAME IS HIROMI GO.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX: **SEARCH FOR A SIDEKICK**



IF ANYONE'S MAKING MONEY OFF THIS PROGRAM, IT'S A DAMN CRIME.
hey, why are we all watching TV?
WHAT A LOAD OF CRAP
DESTRADE
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI
THE WANNABE COMEDIAN

I'LL TELL YOU THIS, THOUGH-- PULL WHATEVER NUMBERS YOU WANT, BUT WITHOUT MY APPROVAL YOU'RE NOTHING BUT TRASH!
THIS GARBAGE ACTUALLY GETS GOOD RATINGS, TOO!

POOTAN IS THE BEST!
MAN, THAT SHOW'S FUNNY!
HA HA!
TELEVISION IS AS GOOD AS DEAD. MY ONLY CHOICE NOW IS TO BECOME A PERFORMER AND PUT AN END TO THIS ERA OF IGNORANCE.
ISHIKAWA GOT SMACKED AGAIN!
KICKED HIM RIGHT ON THE CHIN...
HE MUST HATE HIM.
CRACK
HMM. IF I CAN FIND A SIDEKICK TO COMPLEMENT THE POWER OF MY AMAZING HUMOR, IT'LL GET THE AUDIENCE EVEN MORE INVOLVED.
ONCE I MAKE MY DEBUT, I'LL BE MORE CONCERNED WITH HOW THE PUBLIC RECEIVES ME THAN WITH HOW MUCH I'M PAID.

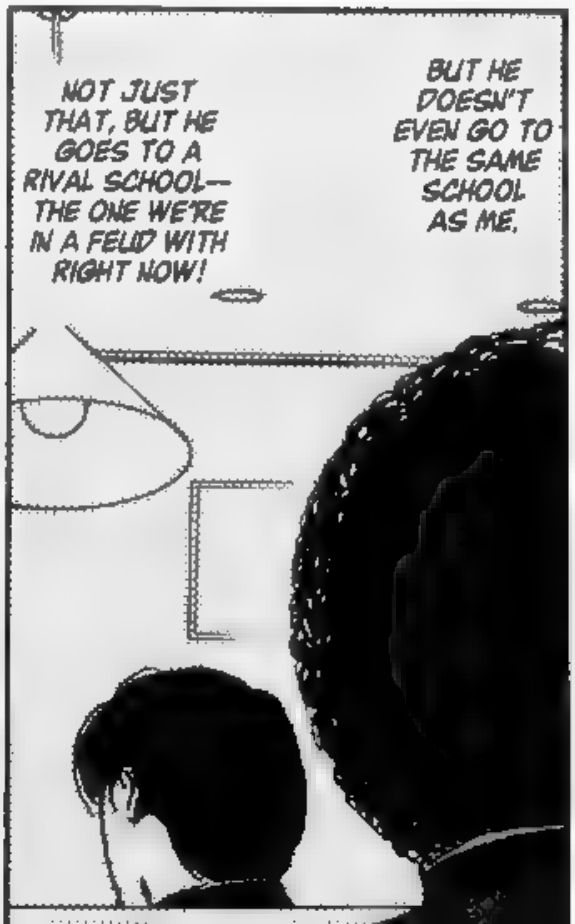
OPEN
IN THAT CASE, THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN WHO IS WORTHY!
YEAH, EVER SINCE THE HIJACKING
TAKE-NOUCHI HAS LOST WEIGHT, HUH?
PROTAGONIST
TAKASHI KAMIYAMA
(AKA "HONEY BOY")
HMM. IT'S PROBABLY JUST YOUR IMAGI-NATION.
I GET THE FEELING SOMEONE'S FOLLOWING US AROUND.
THERE'S ONE OTHER THING THAT'S BEEN BUGGIN' ME...
I KNOW HIS TRUE IDENTITY (HONEY BOY), BUT IF SOME GUY I DIDN'T KNOW CAME UP AND SAID, "WE'D MAKE AN AWESOME COMEDIC DUO," I'D PROBABLY BACK THE HELL OFF.
THE PROBLEM IS, HOW DO I APPROACH HIM?

HE COULD TRY TO CLAIM THE RIGHT TO LEAD OUR COMEDY DUO! NO, IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO REVEAL MYSELF AFTER ALL.
I COULD ALWAYS TELL HIM THAT I'M SALTY TARO. BUT THE PROBLEM THERE IS THAT HE RANKS HIGHER THAN ME ON THE LATE-NIGHT RADIO SCENE.

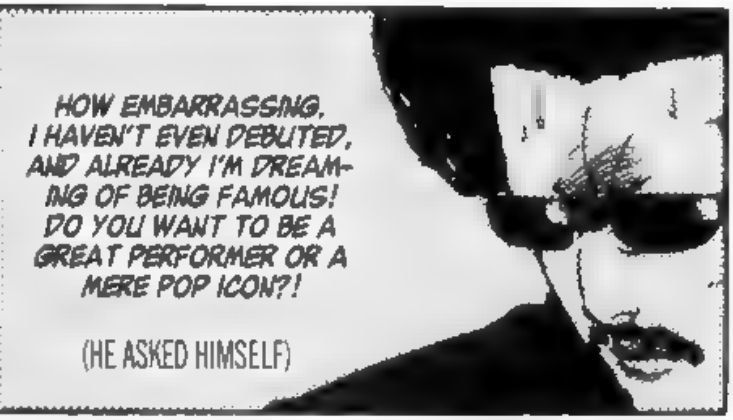
BUT RECENTLY, THE TREND HAS BEEN FOR A COMEDIAN TO HAVE A SIDEKICK THAT IS A FORMER CLASSMATE, OR SOMEONE FROM HIS THEATER GROUP.
BACK IN THE DAY, THE AGENTS USED TO DECIDE WHO'D BE A COMEDIAN'S PARTNER

WAIT A MINUTE...

TWO PEOPLE WITH NOTHING IN COMMON MEET AND END UP BECOMING A COMEDY DUO. HOW DRAMATIC IS THAT?! IT'LL ALL JUST BE PART OF THE LEGEND ONCE WE MAKE IT BIG.


NOT JUST THAT, BUT HE GOES TO A RIVAL SCHOOL— THE ONE WE'RE IN A FELID WITH RIGHT NOW!
BUT HE DOESN'T EVEN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS ME.

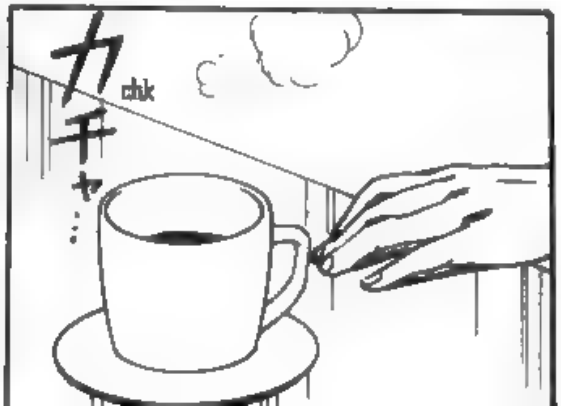
HISTORIC PERSONALITIES FEATURES
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI,
performer
YAMAGUCHI INDULGES IN A LITTLE DAYDREAMING
WOW, WHAT AN AMAZING COINCI-DENCE!
WELL, YES, I DID.
SO YOU JUST RAN INTO MR. HONEY AT A COFFEE SHOP ONE DAY?


HOW EMBARRASSING. I HAVEN'T EVEN DEBUTED, AND ALREADY I'M DREAM-ING OF BEING FAMOUS! DO YOU WANT TO BE A GREAT PERFORMER OR A MERE POP ICON?!
(HE ASKED HIMSELF)

NO! WHAT AM I DOING, DREAMING UP THAT KINDA CRAP?!

AND I'M NOT GOING TO BEAT AROUND THE BUSH! THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO PLAY IT ALL COOL LIKE THAT!
THE FIRST THING I GOTTA DO IS CREATE A COMEDY TEAM WITH HONEY BOY!

よし!!
いくぞ!!
OK! HERE GOES!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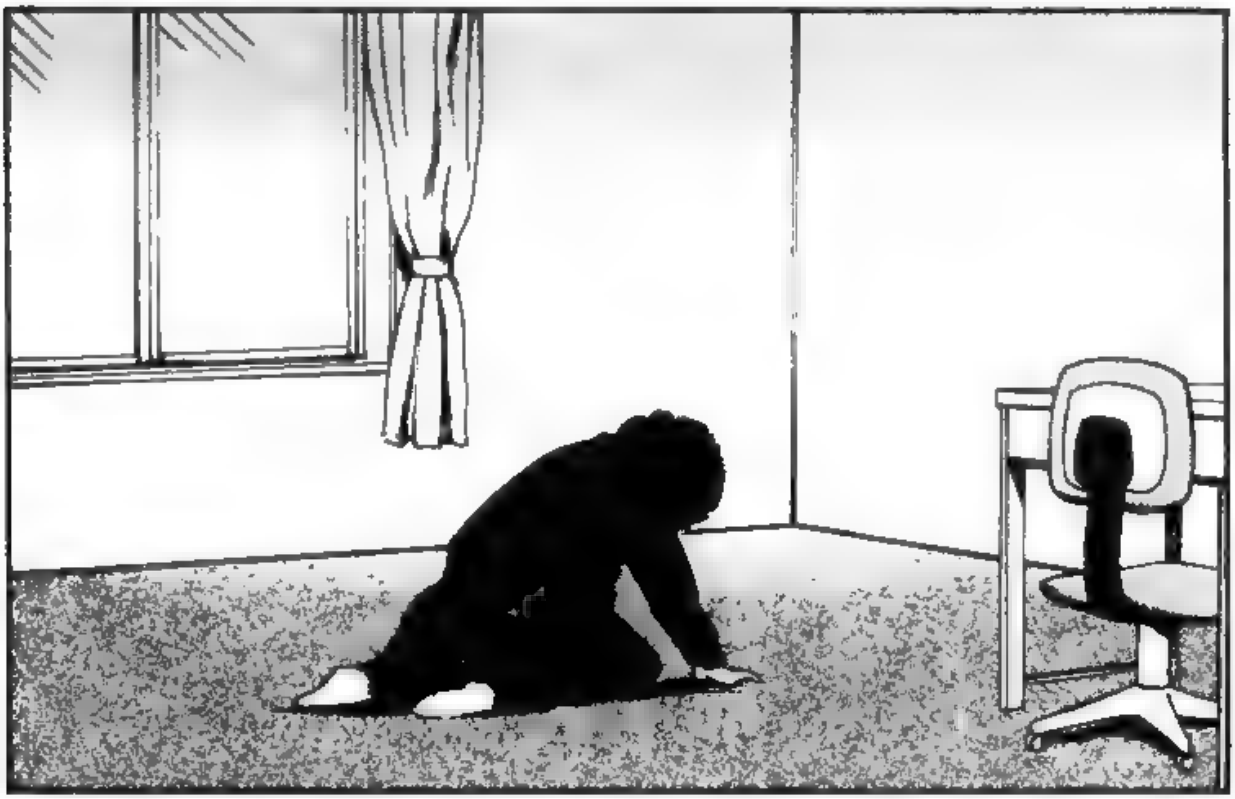
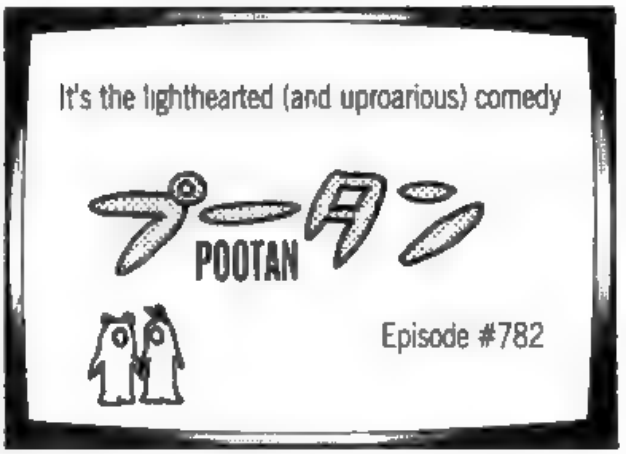
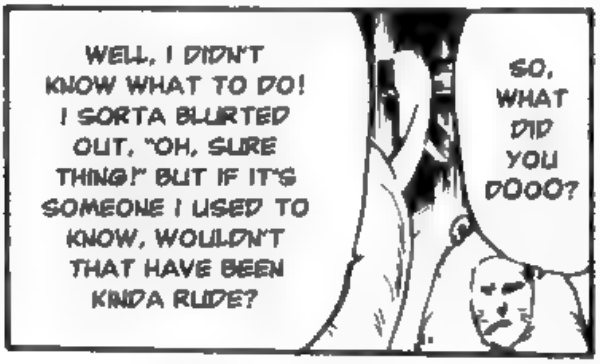


POOTAN SURE IS FUNNY, ISN'T HE?

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN: **THE TWO ARE IDOLS**

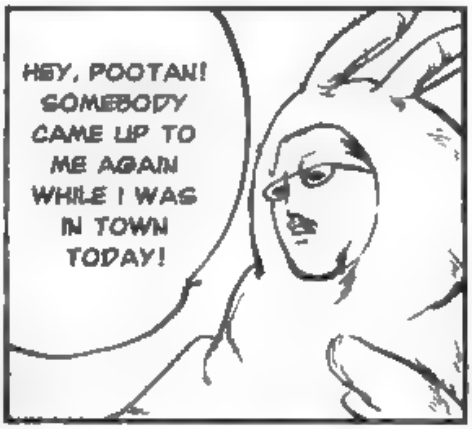


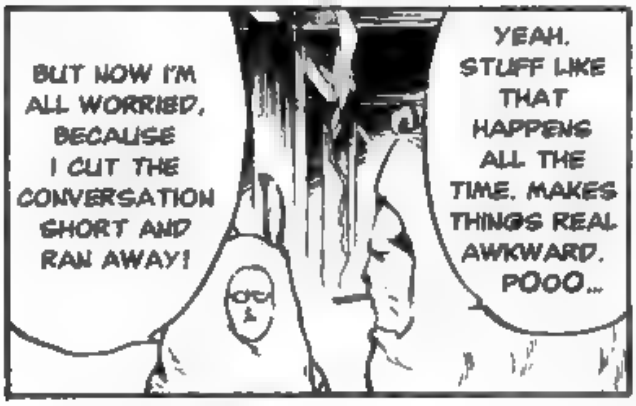

WELL, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! I SORTA BLURTED OUT, "OH, SURE THING!" BUT IF IT'S SOMEONE I USED TO KNOW, WOULDN'T THAT HAVE BEEN KINDA RUDE?
SO, WHAT DID YOU DOOO?

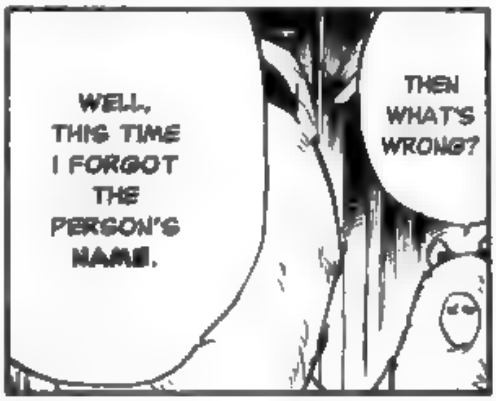
DESTRADE HIGH 1ST YEAR BOSS
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI
I GIVE UP! WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO MEAN, POOTAN?
HEY, IT AIN'T POOTAN'S PROBLEM. POOO!
THIS CRAP IS NOT FUNNY. NOT ONE DAMN BIT!
I'M GIVING THIS PROGRAM ANOTHER LOOK, AND I STILL THINK...
BUT, ONLY AN AMATEUR WOULD JUST WRITE IT OFF BY SAYING "IT SUCKS", AND LEAVE IT AT THAT.
I EVEN BOUGHT THE BOOK.
Here to the show!
Here's your chance to catch up!
POOTAN
YOUR GUIDE TO ENJOYING IT
IF I'M SERIOUS ABOUT BEING A PRO ENTERTAINER, I NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IT IS ABOUT THIS SHOW THAT MAKES IT SUCH A HIT.

I'LL FIND THE SECRET TO ITS POPULARITY, AND I WON'T OVERLOOK EVEN THE SMALLEST DETAIL!
THEN THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING ABOUT IT!
ANYHOW, IF THIS ABOMINATION IS ENOUGH TO MAKE EVEN THAT GENIUS HONEY BOY LAUGH...

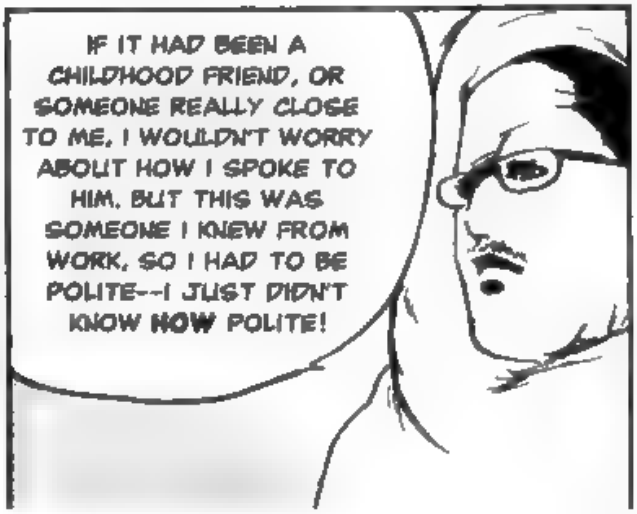
NO, THIS TIME IT WAS SOMEONE I DO KNOW!
Busy grinding sesame seeds
ANOTHER GUY YOU DIDN'T KNOW?

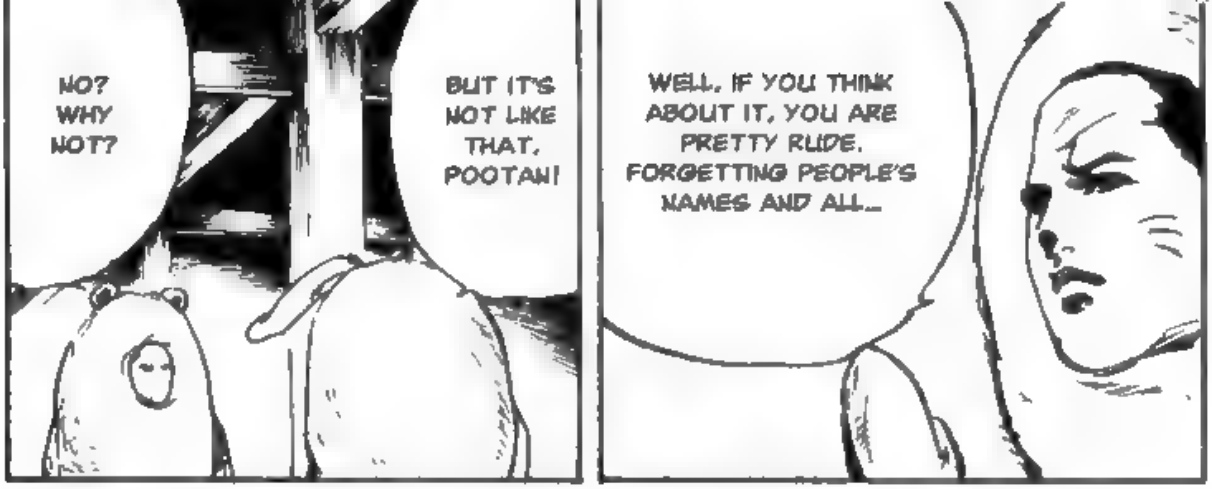

HEY, POOTAN! SOMEBODY CAME UP TO ME AGAIN WHILE I WAS IN TOWN TODAY!


BUT NOW I'M ALL WORRIED, BECAUSE I CUT THE CONVERSATION SHORT AND RAN AWAY!
YEAH. STUFF LIKE THAT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME. MAKES THINGS REAL AWKWARD. POOO...


WELL, THIS TIME I FORGOT THE PERSON'S NAME.
THEN WHAT'S WRONG?

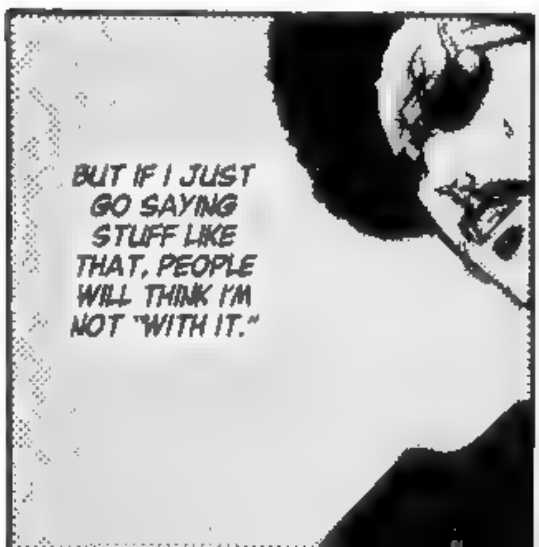
UH, YEAH. I CAN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT IT, THOUGH...
AH. AN ASSOCIATE. HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! YOU MEAN YOU HAVE A J-JOB?


IF IT HAD BEEN A CHILDHOOD FRIEND, OR SOMEONE REALLY CLOSE TO ME, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HOW I SPOKE TO HIM. BUT THIS WAS SOMEONE I KNEW FROM WORK, SO I HAD TO BE POLITE--I JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW POLITE!


NO? WHY NOT?
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, POOTAN!
WELL, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, YOU ARE PRETTY RUDE. FORGETTING PEOPLE'S NAMES AND ALL...

SAY, WHAT IS HIS NAME ANYHOW?
↑ Voiceover
BWAHAHA! THAT'S A GOOD ONE! POOO!
HE CALLED ME "TARO-KUN," OR SOMETHING!
BECAUSE THAT PERSON GOT MY NAME WRONG!

I JUST DON'T GET THIS GARBAGE! WHAT IS IT WITH THIS DAMN SHOW?
AND WHAT ARE THOSE TWO SUPPOSED TO BE?


BUT IF I JUST GO SAYING STUFF LIKE THAT, PEOPLE WILL THINK I'M NOT "WITH IT."

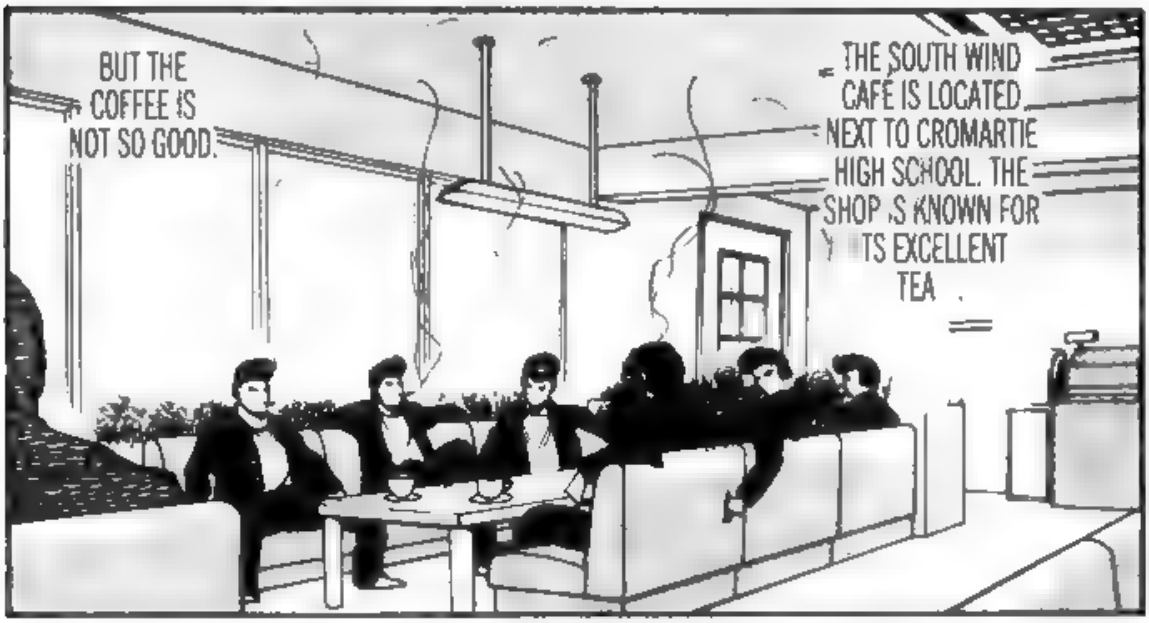
BWAM

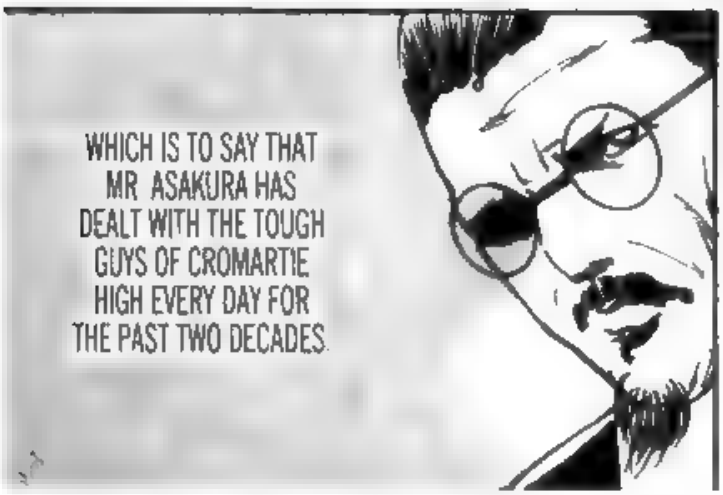
MAN, I GOTTA STOP WHINING TO MYSELF. I'LL JUST END UP SOUNDING LIKE SOME CRUSTY OLD PERFORMER WHO'S BITTER ABOUT THE ONES WHO MADE IT BIG.
THIS IS LIKE TORTURE.
WHAT A WORLD...
IF SOMETHING SUCKS, WHY CAN'T A MAN JUST SAY IT SUCKS?
AH!
GET A GRIP! THINK! THERE *MUST* BE SOME REASON THIS SHOW IS SO POPULAR!
NOT THAT I'D EVER SAY THAT CRAP'S *CUTE*, BUT THE FACT IS CHILDREN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED WITH WEIRD OR FUNNY-LOOKING THINGS...AND THEY SAY THERE'S A KID INSIDE EVERYONE!
THAT'S IT! THE SECRET BEHIND THIS SHOW'S POPULARITY MUST BE THOSE STUFFED ANIMAL OUTFITS! STRANGE COSTUMES LIKE THAT HAVE AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL APPEAL...
YEAH. IF I LOOK AT IT THAT WAY, I'VE GOT NOTHIN' TO FEAR. OK! TIME TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER AND KEEP WATCHING!
ALRIGHT, THEN! FOR THE MOMENT, I'LL ACCEPT THAT THIS SHOW IS POPULAR BECAUSE OF THOSE *OUTFITS*, AND NOT THE TWO GUYS INSIDE.

NOT REALLY.
SO, UH, ANYTHING YOU FEEL LIKE TALKING ABOUT TODAY?
AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR EVERY-ONE'S FAVORITE PART OF THE SHOW-- "TALK TIME!"

I WANNA WATCH POOTAN!

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT: **HELLO, GOODBYE**


BUT THE COFFEE IS NOT SO GOOD.
THE SOUTH WIND CAFE IS LOCATED NEXT TO CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL. THE SHOP IS KNOWN FOR ITS EXCELLENT TEA.



KITAO ASAKURA (45) IS THE OWNER OF THIS ESTABLISHMENT. HE HAS RUN THE CAFE SINCE IT OPENED 20 YEARS AGO, WITHOUT A SINGLE DAY OFF FROM WORK..

I'VE BECOME AN OLD MAN WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT.
HOW TIME FLIES...
MY WORD, HAS IT BEEN 20 YEARS ALREADY?
WELL, TIMES MAY CHANGE, BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT STAYS THE SAME, IT'S THOSE "BADASSES."
WHAT'S MORE, I'VE GOT ANOTHER OLD MAN WORKING HERE PART-TIME...
YOU WORK HERE NOW?
NO MATTER, I THINK OF THESE YOUNG MEN AS MY OWN SONS...
ON THE OTHER HAND, PERHAPS THINGS HAVE CHANGED A BIT.

YOU WANT A PIECE OF ME?!
C'MON ASSHOLE! I'LL FRICKIN' KILL YA!
skssh
HUH?! H-HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?!
YOU TWO MUST HAVE JUST REALIZED YOU'RE BOTH DATING THE SAME GIRL.
OH. UH, SORRY, SIR.
EASY THERE, LADS.
I'VE BEEN AROUND WELL OVER 45 YEARS, BOY. ALL IT TAKES IS A GLANCE AND I CAN TELL WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. HEH HEH.
squik
squik
WHAT?! YOU CAN TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT OUR FACES?
HEH. IT'S WRITTEN ALL OVER YOUR FACES.

YUP. A QUICK GLANCE AT YOUR... FACES...

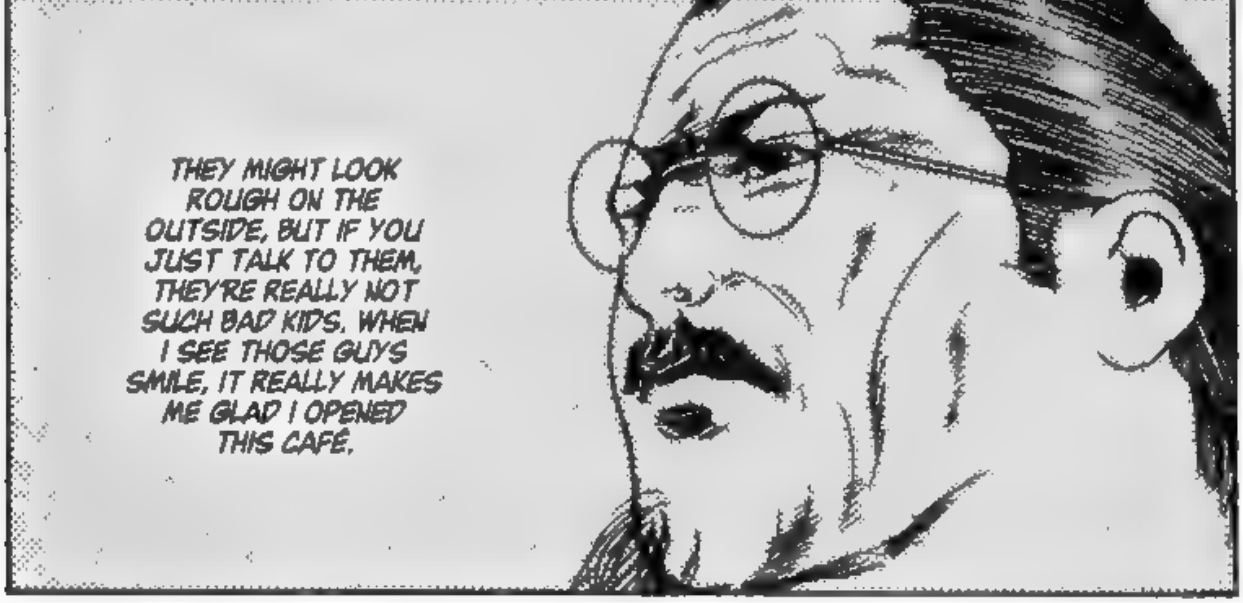
WELL, I SEE ALL KIND'S COME IN HERE. THAT'S WHAT MAKES BEING AROUND RUFFIANS SO INTERESTING.

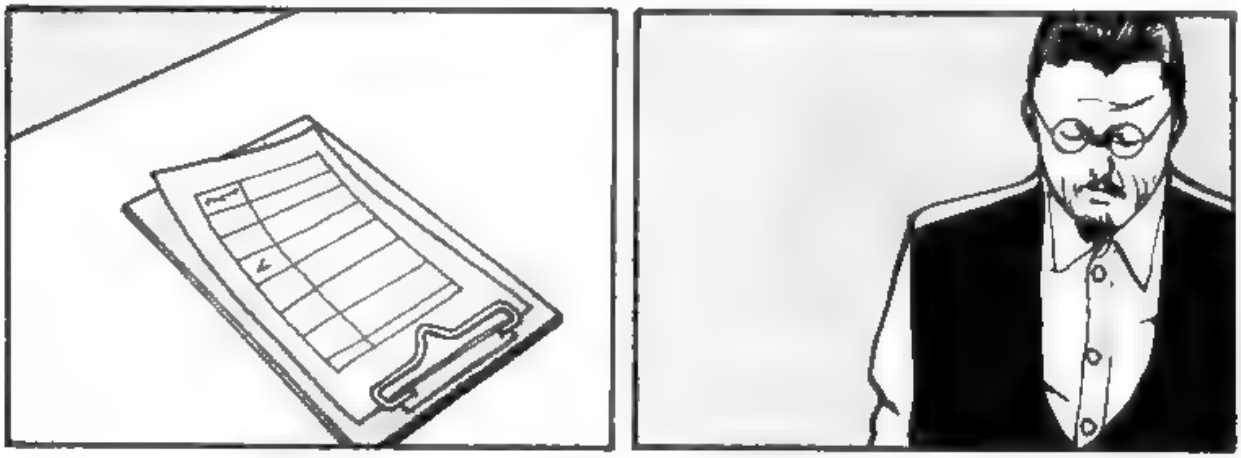
HM. NO, I DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD FIGURE THAT ONE OUT. (WHAT'S HE SUPPOSED TO BE, ANYWAY?)

THERE'S THIS GIRL WHO KINDA TOLD ME SHE LIKES ME, AND...WELL, I DON'T REALLY LIKE HER SO MUCH, BUT I MEAN...I DON'T WANT TO BE RUDE OR ANYTHING.

YES?
UH, EXCUSE ME.

DON'T YOU THINK THE WAY YOU'RE ACTING RIGHT NOW COULD HURT HER THE MOST?
AH. SO THAT YOU WON'T HURT HER FEELINGS...
IS THERE, LIKE, A GOOD WAY TO TURN HER DOWN?
A REAL MAN, HUH?
IF A REAL MAN DOESN'T LIKE A GIRL, THEN HE'LL TELL IT TO HER STRAIGHT, "I'M NOT INTERESTED."
SEEMS TO ME YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT MAKIN' YOURSELF LOOK GOOD—AND THAT'S EXACTLY THE KIND OF THINKING THAT CAN HURT OTHERS.
HUH?
MOST PEOPLE DON'T WANT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH PUNKS LIKE US, BUT YOU'RE DIFFERENT. WE CAN RELY ON YOU MORE THAN OUR STINKIN' TEACHERS, OR EVEN OUR PARENTS.
THANKS A LOT, MR. ASAKURA. YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR STUFF.
CERTAINLY! YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME HERE. TAKE CARE, NOW!
cha-ring
MIND IF I STOP BY AGAIN TOMORROW?
AH, STOP IT. I'M JUST A RAMBLING OLD MAN.


THEY MIGHT LOOK ROUGH ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT IF YOU JUST TALK TO THEM, THEY'RE REALLY NOT SUCH BAD KIDS. WHEN I SEE THOSE GUYS SMILE, IT REALLY MAKES ME GLAD I OPENED THIS CAFÉ.



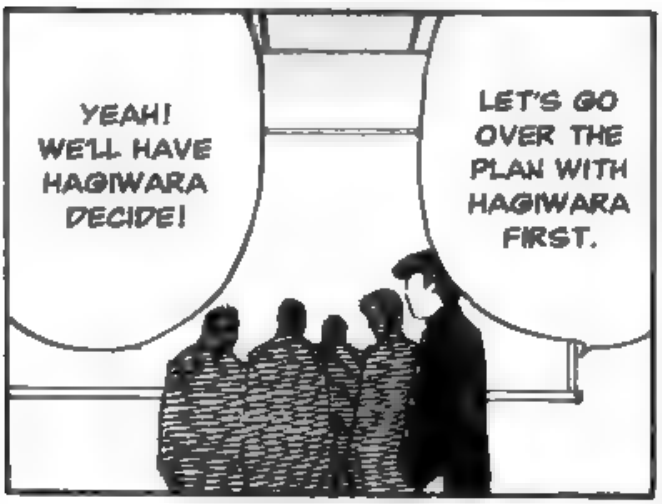
BADASSES WILL BE BADASSES.

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE: **BEAUTIFUL NAME**

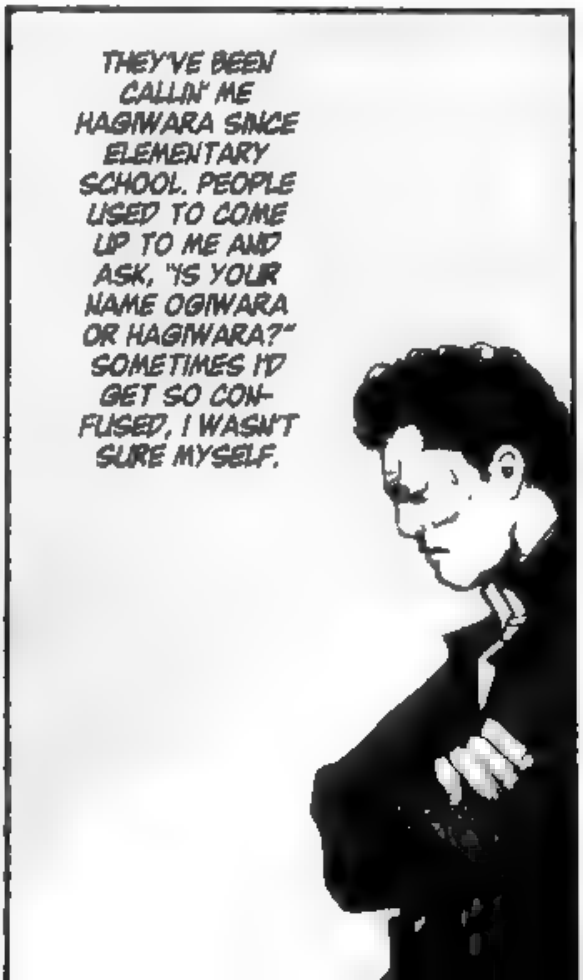
THE ONLY THING IS, TAKENOUCHI'S BEEN SKIPPIN' SCHOOL A LOT... HE'S BEEN BLOWIN' US OFF, TOO. SO WE'RE GONNA NEED **YOUR** HELP, HAGIWARA. YOU'RE OUR SCHOOL'S #2 MAN.
YEAH! WE'LL TEACH 'EM **NEVER** TO SCREW WITH US AGAIN!
OK, LET'S GO PUT THE SMACK DOWN ON BASS!
AAH.
WE ALL KNOW HOW TOUGH YOU ARE. WILL YA HELP US?!
LEAVE IT TO ME.
BASS, HUH?
WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU, HAGIWARA! IF YOU LEAD, EVERY ONE OF US WILL BACK YOU UP!
I'M SO GLAD HE'S ON **OUR** SIDE!
I KNEW WE COULD COUNT ON HAGIWARA!

THEY ALL LOVE ME...
I'VE BEEN BUILDIN' UP A REPUTATION FOR MYSELF, SLOW AND STEADY, FIGHT BY FIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE I FINALLY HAVE SOME RESPECT HERE AT CROMARTIE.

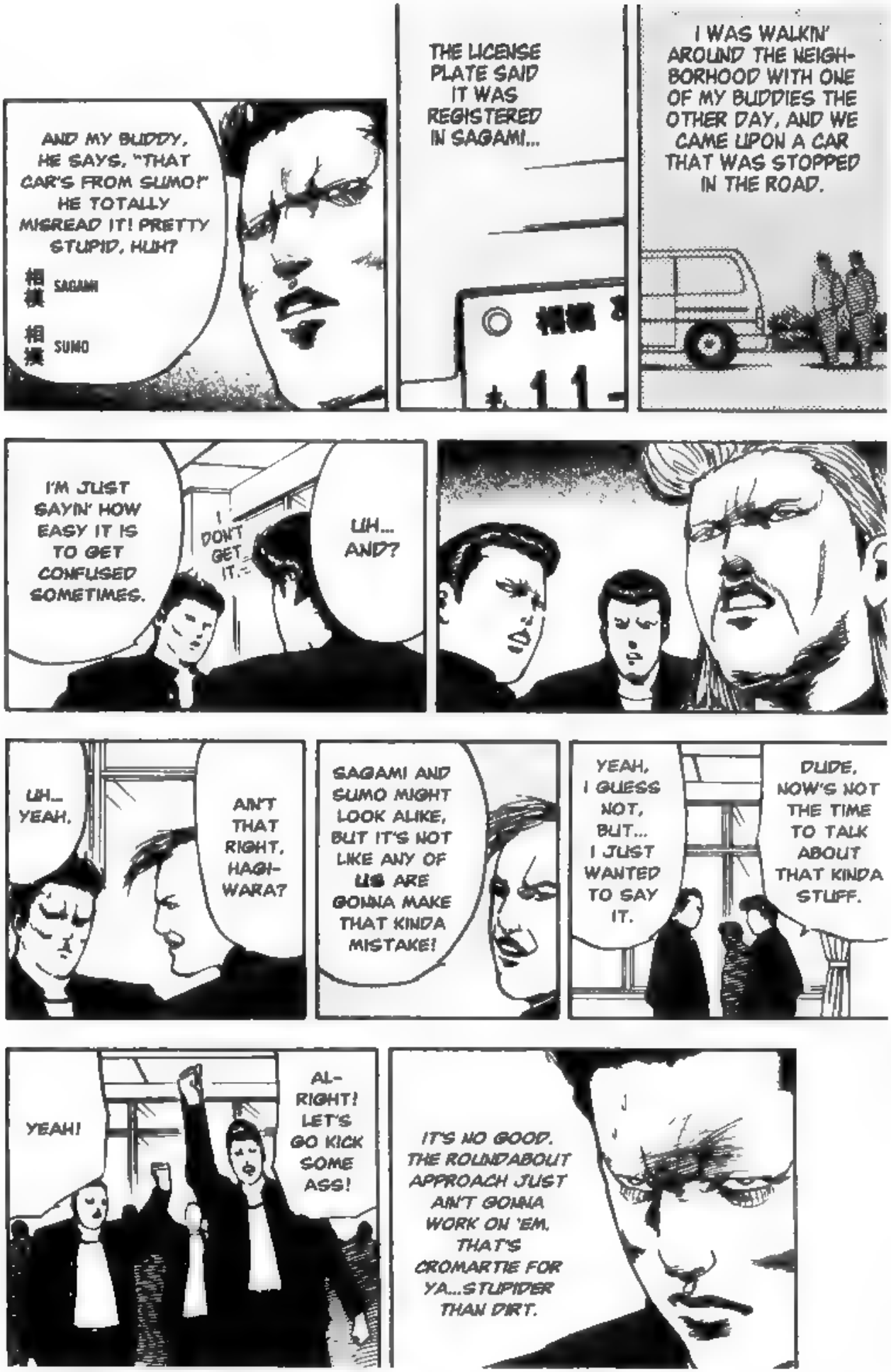
Yes
荻原
OGIWARA
No
萩原
HAGIWARA
IT'S JUST, MY NAME IS OGIWARA, NOT HAGIWARA.


YEAH! WE'LL HAVE HAGIWARA DECIDE!
LET'S GO OVER THE PLAN WITH HAGIWARA FIRST.

NOW THAT THEY'RE ALL WORKED UP, IT'D BE KINDA HARD TO BREAK IT TO 'EM THAT MY NAME'S ACTUALLY OGIWARA...


THEY'VE BEEN CALLIN' ME HAGIWARA SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. PEOPLE USED TO COME UP TO ME AND ASK, "IS YOUR NAME OGIWARA OR HAGIWARA?" SOMETIMES I'D GET SO CONFUSED, I WASN'T SURE MYSELF.

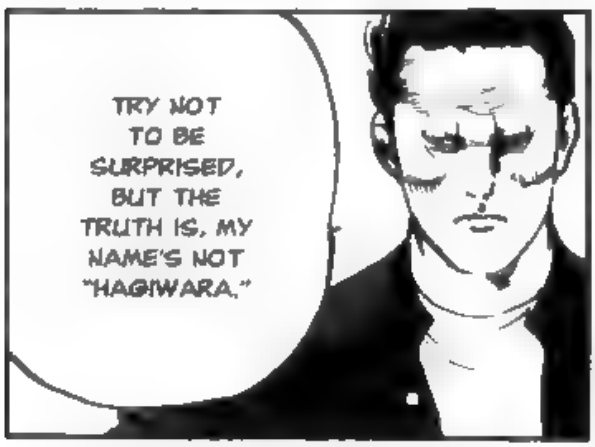
IT'S YOUR CALL, HAGI-WARA!
WE'RE COUNTIN' ON YA, OGIWARA!
IT'S UP TO YOU, HAGI-WARA!
WITH HAGIWARA ON OUR SIDE, WE'LL BE AS STRONG AS 100 MEN! BASS IS FINISHED!
HUH?! HOLD ON A SECOND. DID SOMEONE JUST CALL ME OGIWARA?!
NO WAY! HAVE THEY KNOWN IT'S "OGIWARA" ALL ALONG, AND JUST DON'T GIVE A DAMN?!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
ALRIGHT, CAN YOU ALL LISTEN UP FOR A MINUTE?
HMM. I'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHIN' TO LET THESE GUYS KNOW WHAT MY REAL NAME IS...


I WAS WALKIN' AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH ONE OF MY BUDDIES THE OTHER DAY, AND WE CAME UPON A CAR THAT WAS STOPPED IN THE ROAD.
THE LICENSE PLATE SAID IT WAS REGISTERED IN SAGAMI...
AND MY BUDDY, HE SAYS, "THAT CAR'S FROM SUMO!" HE TOTALLY MISREAD IT! PRETTY STUPID, HUH?
相模 SAGAMI
相撲 SUMO
UH... AND?
I DON'T GET IT.
I'M JUST SAYIN' HOW EASY IT IS TO GET CONFUSED SOMETIMES.
DUDE, NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO TALK ABOUT THAT KINDA STUFF.
YEAH, I GUESS NOT, BUT... I JUST WANTED TO SAY IT.
SAGAMI AND SUMO MIGHT LOOK ALIKE, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE ANY OF US ARE GONNA MAKE THAT KINDA MISTAKE!
AIN'T THAT RIGHT, HAGIWARA?
UH... YEAH.
AL-RIGHT! LET'S GO KICK SOME ASS!
YEAH!
IT'S NO GOOD. THE ROUNDABOUT APPROACH JUST AIN'T GONNA WORK ON 'EM. THAT'S CROMARTIE FOR YA...STUPIDER THAN DIRT.

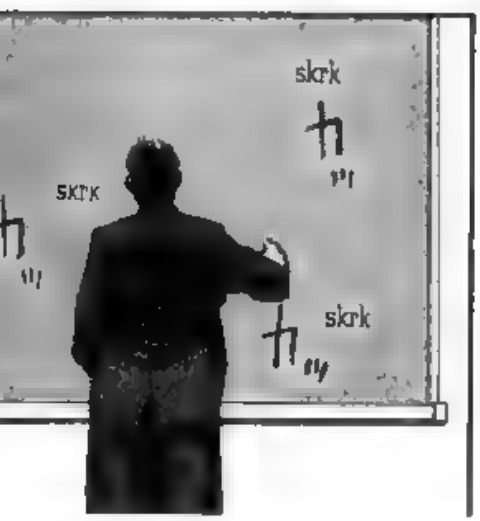
EVERYONE'S GOING TO REMEMBER IT AS THE "LEGEND OF HAGIWARA." AND THAT'S NOT COOL. IT'S **COMPLETELY** DIFFERENT FROM THE "LEGEND OF OGIWARA."
CRAP. EVEN IF WE COMPLETELY DESTROY BASS AND I BECOME A LEGEND...

LISTEN, I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' WHETHER I SHOULD SAY THIS OR NOT, BUT I FINALLY DECIDED.

HUH? NOW WHAT?
WAIT.


TRY NOT TO BE SURPRISED, BUT THE TRUTH IS, MY NAME'S NOT "HAGIWARA."

TELL US **WHAT,** MAN?
I'M SORRY TO BE TELLING YOU GUYS NOW, BUT IF I DON'T, I'M GONNA END UP REGRETTIN' IT.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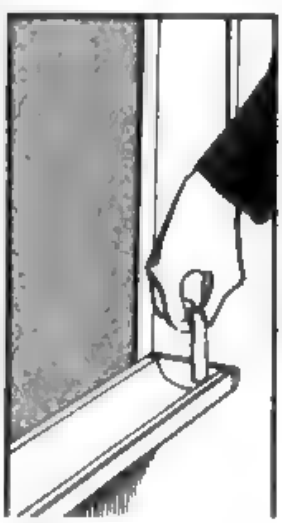
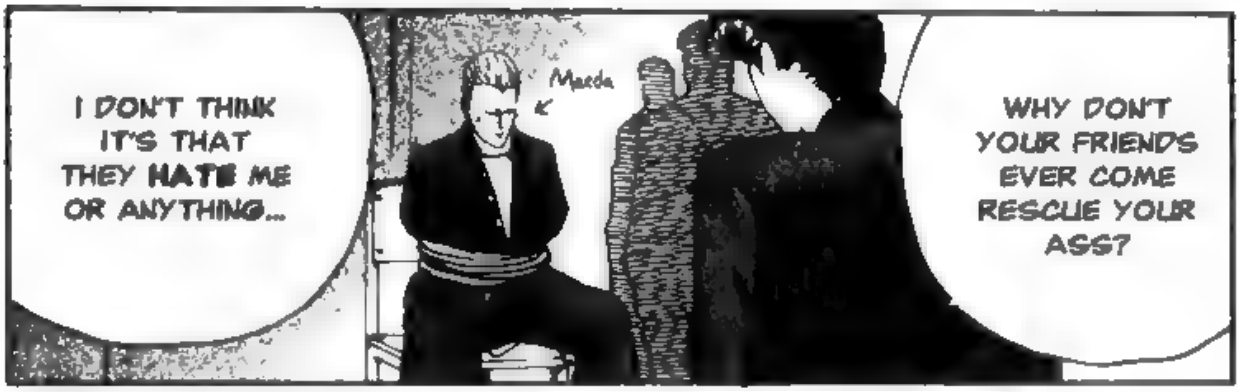


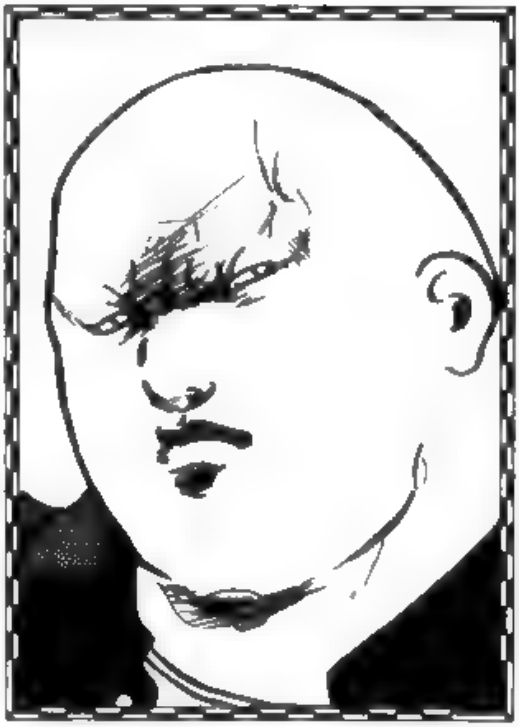
I DON'T THINK YOU GUYS UNDER-STAND.
M-MORE?
HEY, YEAH. I HEARD SOMETHING 'BOUT THAT A LONG TIME AGO...LIKE, A LOT OF KANJI HAVE TWO PRONUNCI-ATIONS, OR EVEN MORE!
NO, YOU'RE MISREADING ONE OF THE KANJI.
DUDE, IT SAYS HAGIWARA.



GO GET 'EM, HAGIGEN.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 5

YUTAKA TAKENOUCHI



Boss of the 1st year students of Cromartie. Champion for those who suffer from motion sickness. In terms of respect and fighting ability, he is first class. The only reason he enrolled at Cromartie is because it's close to his house, so he can avoid having to commute by vehicle. In contrast to his appearance, Takenouchi has actually proven himself to be quite intelligent. His catchphrase is, "I don't feel so good..." Surprisingly, many people have become Takenouchi fans because they, too, get motion sick and can "feel his pain." I think that's hilarious! Right now, Takenouchi is wandering around America somewhere. Both the editor and yours truly had at one point forgotten to bring him back to the story. I have no idea where he's going or when he'll be coming home

NOBORU YAMAGUCHI

Top dog of Destrade Industrial High School's 1st year class. Also head of the bike gang, "Earth, Wind and Fire." He makes one heck of a statement with that magnificent afro. Once you see it, you'll never forget it. Yamaguchi is a regular contributor to a local late night radio show, and even though he's submitted many jokes, he can never seem to top Kamiyama, his most respected rival. His pen name, incidentally, is "Salty Taro." What the heck kind of name is that? His love of comedy and pursuit of comedic knowledge are admirable, but one must wonder if he doesn't have the worst sense of humor of all. His catchphrase is, "We're outta here."

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 6

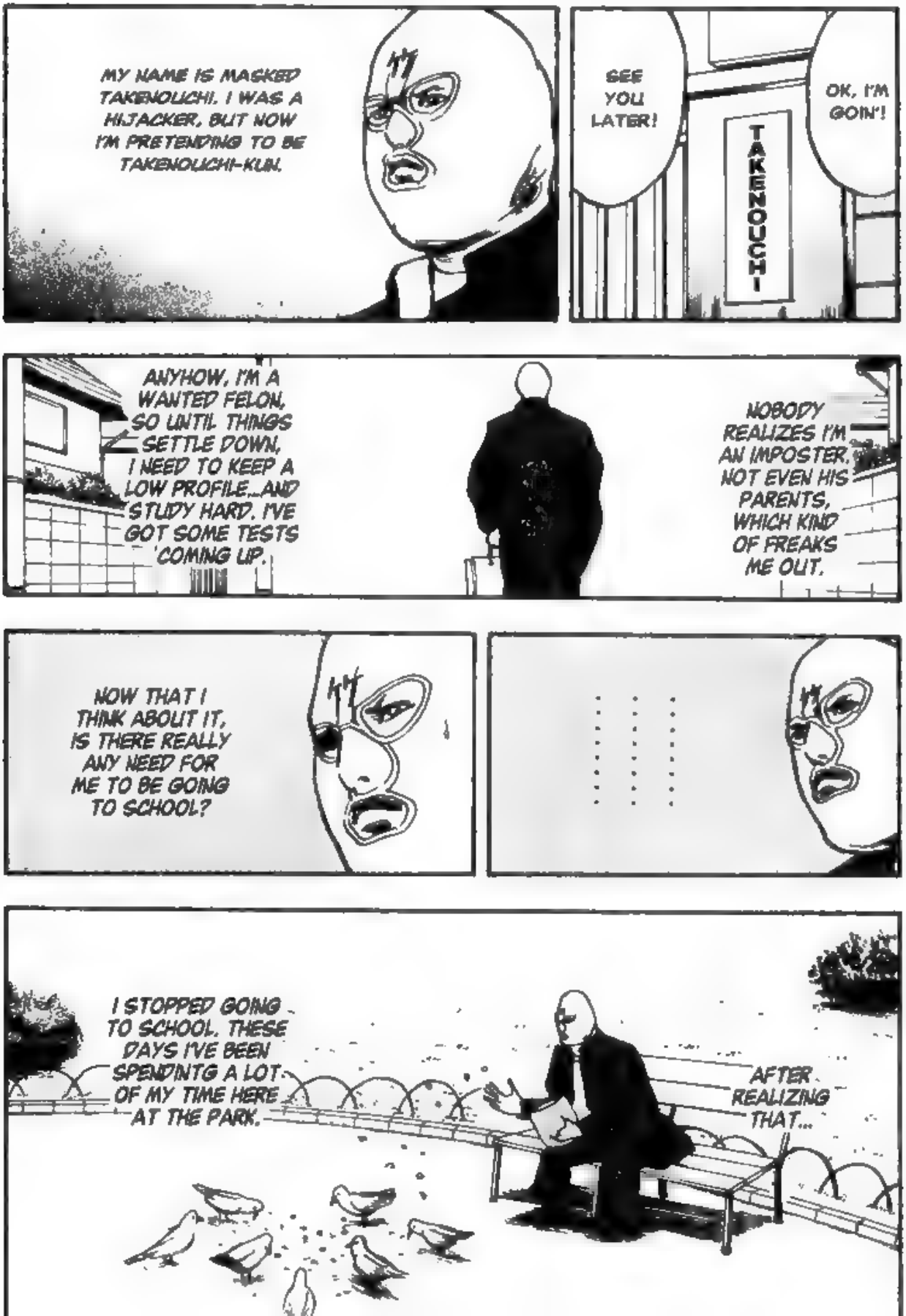
JACKSON SETOUCHI

He is in control of the 1st year students at Bass High School. He has an almost presidential-looking face. His name might imply that he has some non-Japanese blood running through his veins, but it actually doesn't hold any significance. I just gave him that name on a whim. Jackson is a conscientious kingpin, one who meets regularly with his subordinates. It's charming to see all those badasses get together for their meetings. His fatal flaw is that he just doesn't stand out as much as I had hoped, so I don't have too many opportunities to use him in the story. He does have a striking name, though. (LOL)

AKIO TAKEJO

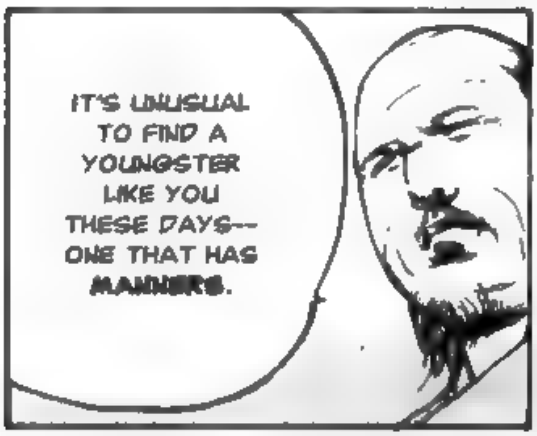
He is a delinquent who wears glasses—a rare find in this manga. He is 2nd in command of the Bass 1st years, and comes across as quite shrewd; some would even say that Bass would be unable to function without him. Akio is the type of guy who stresses over details, sometimes so much that he misses the big picture. If a guy like this can be considered "shrewd," then Bass must really be on a different level... just not necessarily a HIGHER one. No wonder they're Cromartie's rival school.

CHAPTER FORTY: **WHEN DOVES CRY**


MY NAME IS MASKED TAKENOUCHI. I WAS A HIJACKER, BUT NOW I'M PRETENDING TO BE TAKENOUCHI-KUN.
SEE YOU LATER!
OK, I'M GOIN'!
TAKENOUCHI
ANYHOW, I'M A WANTED FELON, SO UNTIL THINGS SETTLE DOWN, I NEED TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE...AND STUDY HARD. I'VE GOT SOME TESTS COMING UP.
NOBODY REALIZES I'M AN IMPOSTER. NOT EVEN HIS PARENTS, WHICH KIND OF FREAKS ME OUT.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, IS THERE REALLY ANY NEED FOR ME TO BE GOING TO SCHOOL?
. . . . . .
I STOPPED GOING TO SCHOOL. THESE DAYS I'VE BEEN SPENDING A LOT OF MY TIME HERE AT THE PARK.
AFTER REALIZING THAT...

I LIKE THESE DOVES, TOO. I NOW UNDERSTAND WHY THEY'RE SYMBOLS OF PEACE--THEY HELP TO QUIET THE TURMOIL IN MY MIND. I'VE DECIDED TO NEVER GO BACK TO HIJACKING AGAIN.
C-COO
COO

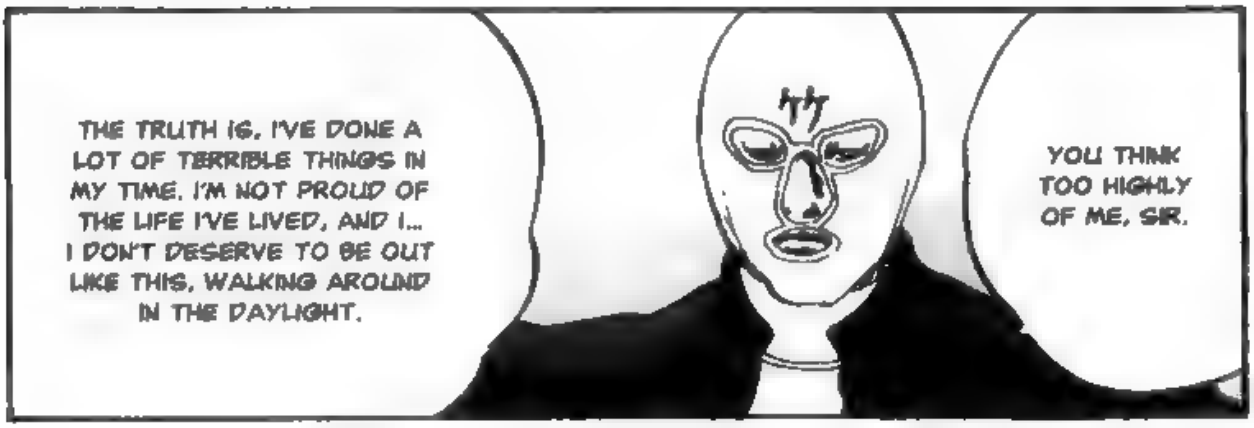
I WONDER HOW HE'S DOING. MAYBE HE'S ABROAD SOMEWHERE, ON THE RUN BECAUSE THE COPS THINK HE'S ME...
YOU KNOW, MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD IF I CONTINUED BEING A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, LIVING MY LIFE THE **RIGHT** WAY THIS TIME. I FEEL KIND'A BAD FOR THE REAL TAKENOUCHI-KUN, THOUGH...

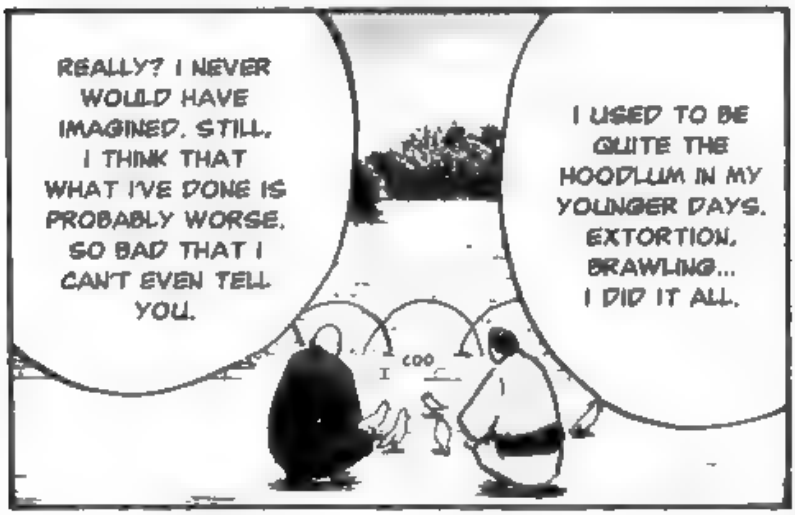

IT'S UNUSUAL TO FIND A YOUNGSTER LIKE YOU THESE DAYS-- ONE THAT HAS **MANNERS**.

GOOD MORNING, SIR. IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU AS WELL.
WELL, IF IT ISN'T MY STUDENT FRIEND! WE MEET AGAIN.

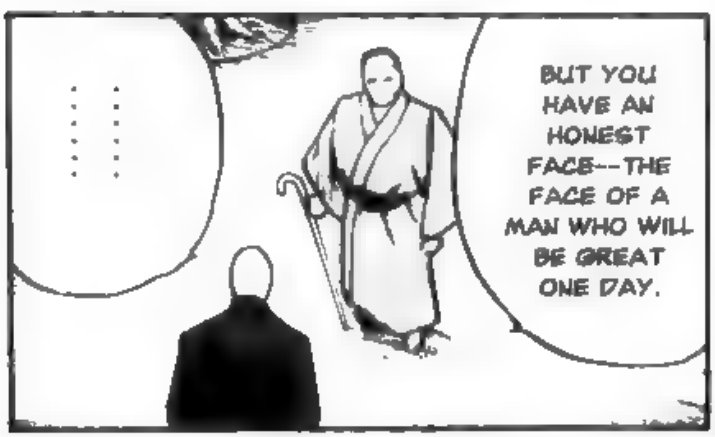
. . . . . .
ㅠㅠ

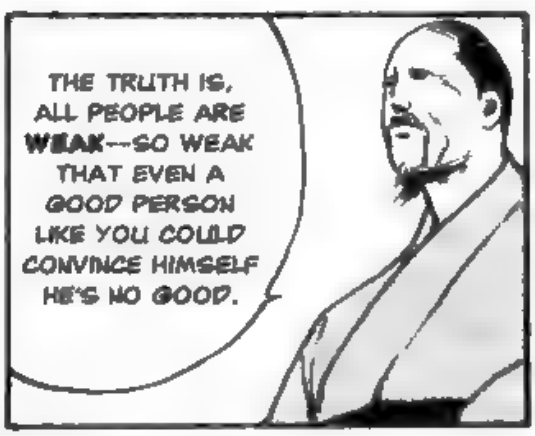
WELL, I THINK IT'S JUST WONDERFUL. YOU'RE A SPLENDID YOUNG MAN.
I...I'M ONLY DOING AS I SHOULD, SIR.

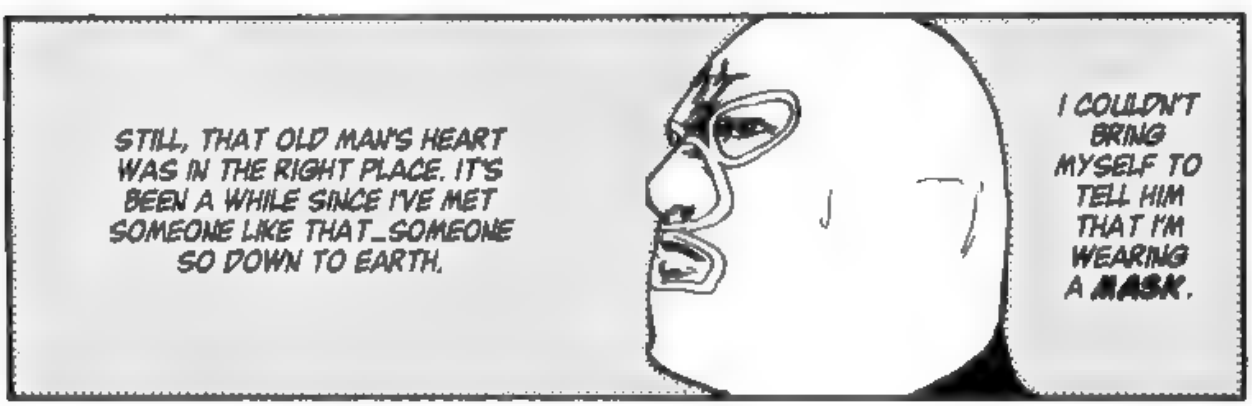

THE TRUTH IS, I'VE DONE A LOT OF TERRIBLE THINGS IN MY TIME. I'M NOT PROUD OF THE LIFE I'VE LIVED, AND I... I DON'T DESERVE TO BE OUT LIKE THIS, WALKING AROUND IN THE DAYLIGHT.
YOU THINK TOO HIGHLY OF ME, SIR.


REALLY? I NEVER WOULD HAVE IMAGINED. STILL, I THINK THAT WHAT I'VE DONE IS PROBABLY WORSE. SO BAD THAT I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU.
I USED TO BE QUITE THE HOODLUM IN MY YOUNGER DAYS. EXTORTION, BRAWLING... I DID IT ALL.
COO

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE, BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE. I'VE DONE SOME PRETTY TERRIBLE THINGS MYSELF.

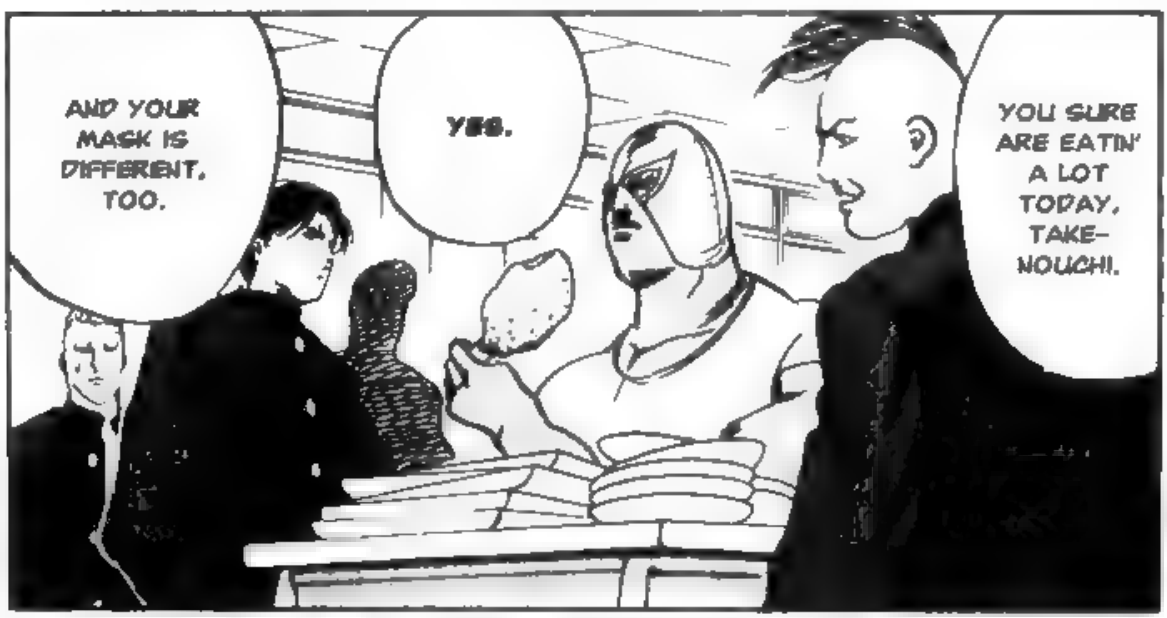

. . . . . .
BUT YOU HAVE AN HONEST FACE--THE FACE OF A MAN WHO WILL BE GREAT ONE DAY.


THE TRUTH IS, ALL PEOPLE ARE **WEAK**--SO WEAK THAT EVEN A *GOOD* PERSON LIKE YOU COULD CONVINCE HIMSELF HE'S NO GOOD.


STILL, THAT OLD MAN'S HEART WAS IN THE RIGHT PLACE. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE MET SOMEONE LIKE THAT_SOMEONE SO DOWN TO EARTH.
*I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO TELL HIM THAT I'M WEARING A **MASK**.*

HUH?
HEY, WE'VE BEEN LOOKIN' ALL OVER FOR YA!
ALRIGHT, THEN! I'VE GOT A FRESH START, AND I'M GOING TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT. I'M GOING TO BE THE MODEL CITIZEN, AND LIVE A LIFE OF PEACE AND QUIET!
GOT A LITTLE SCARED, DID YA? HAPPENS TO ROOKIES ALL THE TIME...
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
MATCH?!
BETTER HURRY. THE MATCH IS STARTIN' SOON.
JAPAN
JAPAN PRO WRESTLING
BUT DON'T WORRY! I'M YOUR TAG TEAM PARTNER TODAY, AND EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE FINE. ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS SHOW 'EM HOW **TOUGH** PRO WRESTLERS REALLY ARE!
YEAH, RIGHT! WHAT PLANET'S GOT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO LOOK LIKE **YOU**?!
I'M JUST AN ORDINARY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.
UM, IT SEEMS YOU'VE MADE A MISTAKE. I'M NOT A WRESTLER...

WOO-HOO!
YEAH!
JUST GIVE 'EM A TASTE OF YOUR "DEFLATION SPIRAL!"
LOOK, YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND!
TODAY'S MATCH IS GONNA BE A TOUGH ONE. DON'T BE GETTIN' ALL SCARED OUT THERE, YA BASTARD!
HUH?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES A REAL MAN?
I KEEP TELLING YOU, YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG PERSON! WHY WON'T YOU LISTEN TO ME?!
Changed → outfits anyway
I SEE. SO, FOR PRO WRESTLERS, FIGHTING IS A WAY OF LIFE. TRULY AN INSPIRING STORY...
A REAL MAN INSPIRES OTHERS BY SHOWING 'EM THE WAY HE LIVES. SO FOR OUR KIND, IF YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, YOU SAY IT IN THE RING!
WOO!
YEAH!
ALRIGHT!
LIKE I TOLD YA, IF YA GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, SAY IT IN THE RING!
WHAM
BUT I'M NOT A PRO WRESTLER!



YOU'RE STANDING OUT WAY TOO MUCH.

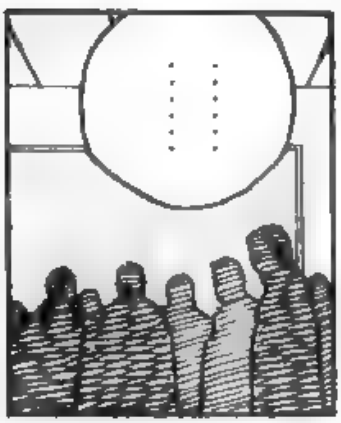
CHAPTER FORTY-ONE: **WE ARE THE WORLD**

SORRY. I KNOW THE TUNE, BUT I SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THE NAME.
YOU DO? SERIOUSLY?! OK, WHAT IS IT?
I THINK I KNOW IT.
UH... SURE.
OK, HERE GOES. LISTEN CAREFULLY, MAEDA.
HUH? ME?
MAYBE IF I HUM IT, WE'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT.
THEN WHAT'S THE DAMN POINT?!
hmrhm- mmm hm hmmm
ha-hmm hmrmm hmmm
THE SONG I'M TALKING ABOUT GOES hm-mmm hm-hmmm. LIKE THAT!
HUH? IT'S NOT?
WHOA, HOLD ON. SORRY, BUT I DON'T THINK THAT'S THE SAME SONG.

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
OH, I SEE! SORRY. THE SONG I WAS THINKING OF GOES ha-hmmmhmm hhmm.
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?!
WAIT A MINUTE. THEN WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE SONG I WAS THINKING OF?
HMM. IT SOUNDED A LITTLE DIFFERENT THIS TIME...
OK, I'LL HUM IT AGAIN. hmmm ha- hmm ha- hmm
WHOA, WE BETTER GO ONE AT A TIME, OR WE'LL NEVER FIGURE THIS OUT. LET'S START WITH HAYASHIDA'S SONG.
I FIGURED YOU GUYS WOULDN'T HAVE A PROBLEM DOING IT ANY-WHERE...
HE'S RIGHT. IT'S OK TO DO IT HERE, THOUGH.
WE CAN'T DO THAT, DUMBASS! IT'D BE WAY TOO EMBAR-RASSING!
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO A MUSIC STORE AND HUM IT FOR SOMEONE THERE? THOSE PEOPLE KNOW LOTS OF SONGS.

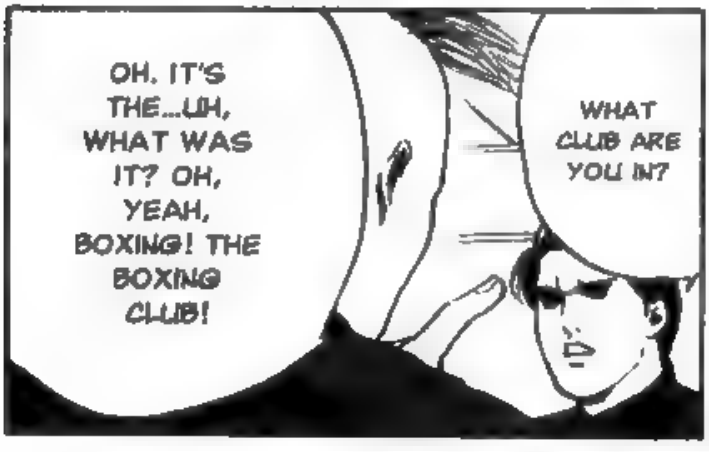
AT ANY RATE, I DON'T THINK WE'LL HAVE MUCH LUCK ON OUR OWN. WE SHOULD GET SOMEONE TO HELP US OUT.
IF WE KNEW THE LYRICS, WE WOULDN'T BE DOING THIS! IDIOT!
DO YOU AT LEAST KNOW ANY OF THE LYRICS? I DON'T THINK JUST HUMMING A TUNE IS GONNA HELP MUCH.
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, THOUGH. HELL, WE'VE ALL HAD SONGS STUCK IN OUR HEADS AND COULDN'T REMEMBER THE NAME.
DUDE, THAT'S ENOUGH. STOP.
hmmm hm nnn he hmm
THANKS. OK, THIS TIME I'LL HUM IT.
WE'LL TRY TO HELP YA OUT!

AARGH, IT'S RIGHT ON THE TIP OF MY TONGUE!
I KNOW I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE, BUT I CAN'T THINK OF THE NAME.
. . . . . .
ha-hmm hm-mmm ha-hmm-m
THANKS A LOT, GUYS.
ALRIGHT, YOU GO ASK THE OTHERS!
DAMMIT! NOW IT'S GONNA BUG ME UNTIL I FIND OUT!
NO, DAMN IT! AM I GONNA HAFTA KILL YOU? IT FRICKIN' GOES hm-hwaam hmmm!
hm-hm-ha hmm RIGHT?
YEAH, THEN IT'S ALL LIKE, hm-ha-hm-hm RIGHT? WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THAT SONG?
HEY, YA KNOW THAT SONG THAT GOES ha-hmm hmmm hmm?
ha-hmmm hmm-hmm hm-hmm
hmm hmmm hWmmm
ha-hm hwa-hmmm ha-hm-hmmm hm ha-hmm... RIGHT?



IF YOU'VE FIGURED IT OUT, PLEASE WRITE ME.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO: **I'M A SOUJI MAN**



FINE! LET'S JUST GET STARTED.
EVEN IF WE DID, IT STILL WOULDN'T BE AN EXCUSE.
YEAH! WE DON'T HAVE A FRICKIN' BOXING CLUB AT THIS SCHOOL!

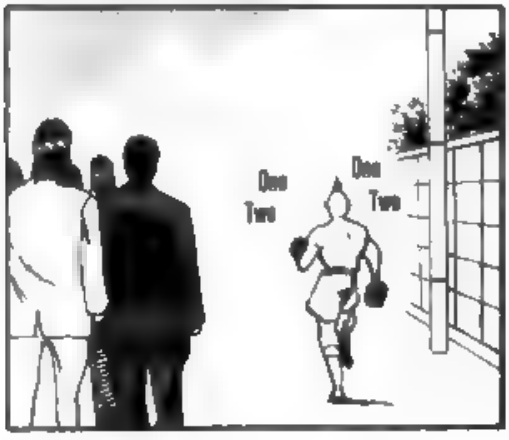
ALRIGHT WE'LL BEGIN BY MOVING ALL THE DESKS TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.
I GUESS EACH SCHOOL'S GOT ITS OWN WAY OF DOING IT.
ACTUALLY, IN MY MIDDLE SCHOOL, WE MOVED THEM TO THE BACK.
THE FRONT, EH? YES, WE'VE DONE IT THAT WAY SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
I'VE GOT IT!
OR THE BACK?
SO SHOULD WE MOVE THEM TO THE FRONT...
HAYASHIDA-KUN... MUST YOU ALWAYS THINK SUCH NONSENSE?
WHAT IF WE PUT 'EM ALL OFF TO THE SIDE?

WHY DO WE HAFTA DO STUFF THE SAME WAY ALL THE TIME?! WE NEED CHANGE, MAN! WITHOUT CHANGE, THERE CAN'T BE NO PROGRESS!
YES, BUT TOO MUCH CHANGE WILL JUST LEAD TO WASTEFULNESS. EFFICIENCY IS WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT WHEN FORMULATING A STRATEGY!
SOMETHING WE NEED TO DO? WHAT COULD THAT POSSIBLY BE?!
HUH?
ARGUE ALL YOU WANT, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT YOU'VE OVERLOOKED. SOMETHING WE NEED TO DO FIRST...
DO WE HAVE TO?
DUDE, I TOTALLY FORGOT.
TH-THAT'S RIGHT!
THAT'S MY ADVICE, AS YOUR ELDER.
WE NEED TO DECIDE IF WE'RE MOVING THE DESKS TO THE FRONT OR THE BACK!

MAEDA, YOU AND MOHAWK GO GET THE MOPS AND BROOMS!
KAMIYAMA, TAKE CARE OF THE CHALK-BOARDS!
HMPF. IT APPEARS WE'RE OUT OF OPTIONS. I WILL ASSUME COMMAND!
MASKED MAN, YOU WIPE DOWN THOSE WINDOWS.
GORILLA AND MUSTACHE, GO GET THE DUST RAGS.
AND I DON'T CARE WHAT ANYONE SAYS— WE'RE MOVING THE CHAIRS TO THE **FRONT**. JUST LIKE WE DID IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!
NOW WAIT A MINUTE!
CARRY ON, GENTLEMEN.
YES. THAT WILL DO.
UM... COULD I HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION FOR A MINUTE?
I'M SORRY, HOKUTO-SAN, BUT TODAY I'M GOING TO SPEAK UP! ENOUGH'S ENOUGH!
YOU DARE RAISE YOUR VOICE TO ME?! KNOW YOUR PLACE, WORM!

I THINK THE CLEANING'S DONE.
.....
HMPH! TIMID COMMONERS SUCH AS YOURSELVES ARE NOT FIT TO LEAD OTHERS!
DON'T WORRY, KAMIYAMA.
I FEEL KINDA BAD, THOUGH.
INSOLENCE! I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I'VE BEEN BUSY DOMINATING ALL THE SCHOOLS IN TOKYO!
DID IT ALSO TEACH YOU TO SKIP OUT ON CLEANING DUTY?
IF THE FOOLS WISH TO CLEAN, THEN LET THEM CLEAN! THAT'S WHAT MY STUDY OF SOVEREIGNTY HAS TAUGHT ME.
I THINK YOU'RE GOING A LITTLE TOO FAR, HOKUTO-KUN.
HOW CAN I TAKE OVER SCHOOLS IF I DON'T COME TO SCHOOL?
SILENCE, PLEBE! HOW DARE YOU COMPARE MY LIES TO HAYASHIDA'S?!
ENOUGH, ALREADY! YOU'RE NO BETTER AT LYING THAN HAYASHIDA-KUN!
IF YOU'RE THAT BUSY, DON'T BOTHER COMING TO SCHOOL!

One
Two
One
Two
. . . . . .

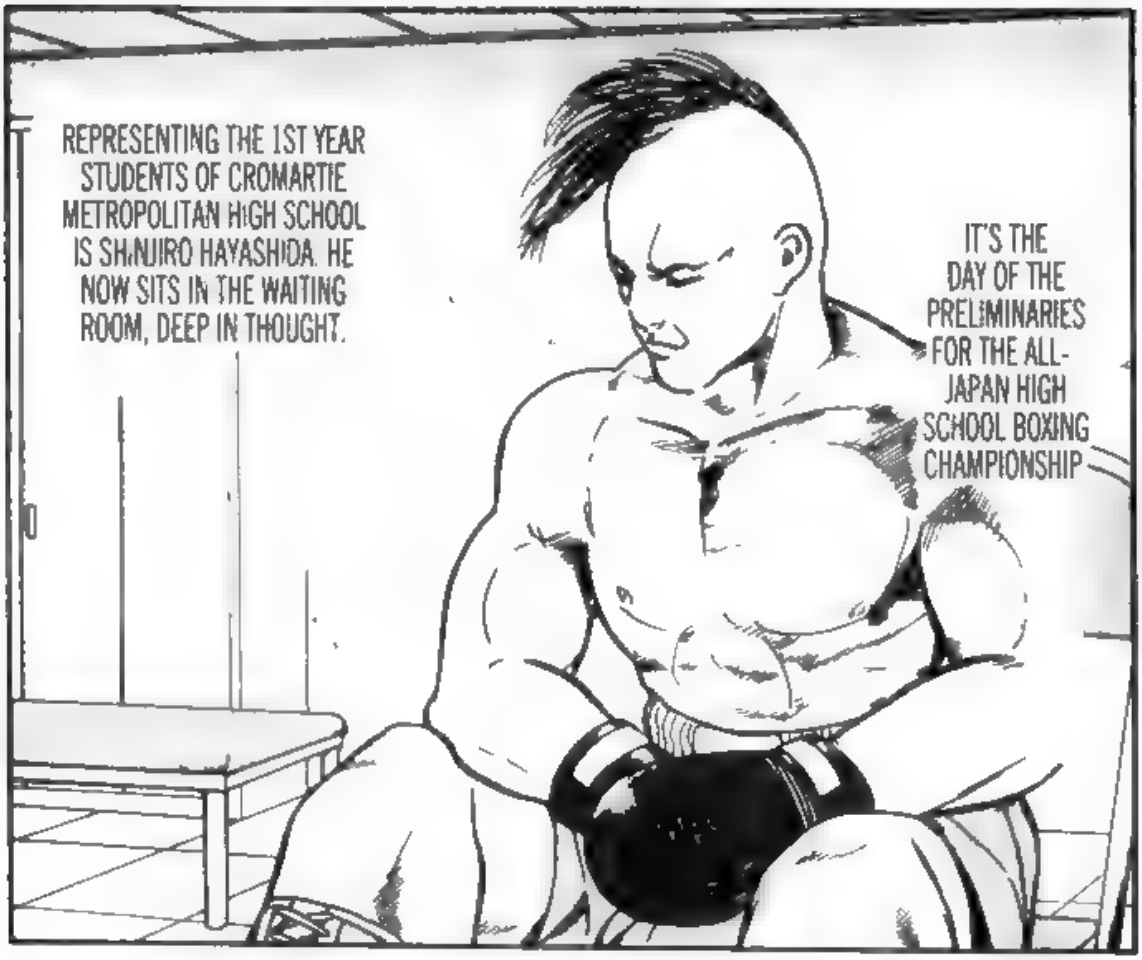

One
Two
One
Two

HE REALLY IS IN THE BOXING CLUB.

ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO RUN WITH YOUR GLOVES ON?

NO, YOU AREN'T.

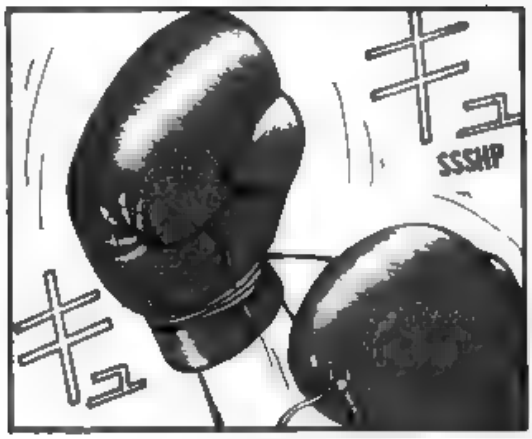
CHAPTER FORTY-THREE: **BOXER IN THE DARK**

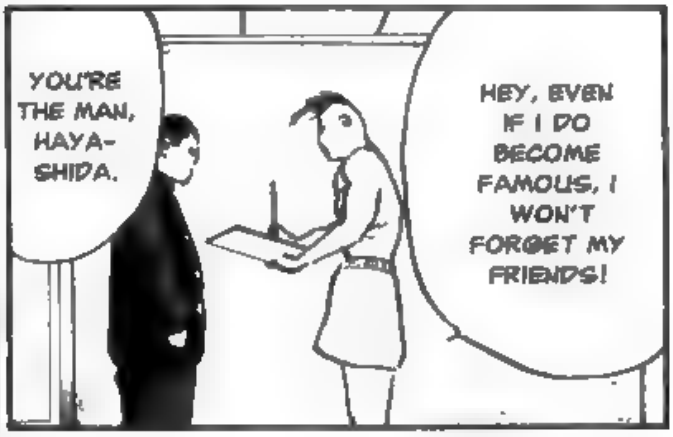

REPRESENTING THE 1ST YEAR STUDENTS OF CROMARTIE METROPOLITAN HIGH SCHOOL IS SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA. HE NOW SITS IN THE WAITING ROOM, DEEP IN THOUGHT.
IT'S THE DAY OF THE PRELIMINARIES FOR THE ALL-JAPAN HIGH SCHOOL BOXING CHAMPIONSHIP

HUH?
THANKS, KAMIYAMA. I APPRECIATE EVERYONE'S SUPPORT. I'M SURE IT'LL GIVE ME STRENGTH...
. . . . . .
LET ME SHAKE YOUR HAND. IT'S THE LEAST I CAN OFFER AS A PARTING GIFT TO A GOOD FRIEND.
ACCEPTIN' A FRIEND'S HANDSHAKE WITH MY GLOVES ON WOULD BE PRETTY RUDE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SWIP
HEH, I KNOW THIS DON'T REALLY SOUND LIKE ME, BUT...I'LL WIN THIS ONE FOR YOU GUYS!
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, HAYA-SHIDA-KUN.
HM.

YOU BET. YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN MY RIVAL...
HMPH! WIN THIS ONE, AND YOU'LL FACE ME NEXT!
THANKS, I WILL!
GO GET HIM!
YEAH, BUT YOU GET USED TO IT AFTER A WHILE.
I NEVER THOUGHT PUTTING YOUR GLOVES ON AND TAKING THEM OFF COULD BE SO TROUBLESOME.
SSHP
I JUST WANT YOUR AUTOGRAPH! IF YOU GO ON AND BECOME A WORLD CHAMPION OR SOMETHING, I PROBLY WON'T GET THIS KIND OF CHANCE AGAIN!
WHAT IS IT?
WOULD YOU SIGN THIS FOR ME?
IT'S ALRIGHT.
OH, SORRY. I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE YOUR GLOVES OFF AGAIN.
.....

NOTE: • the author am neither fan/visit with nor interested in boxing, so I ask readers to kindly overlook any inaccuracies in my portrayal of this sport. Also, ask that you refrain from snide remarks like "That's not how high school boxing is!" or "They aren't even wearing helmets!" etc.


SSSHP


YOU'RE THE MAN, HAYA-SHIDA.
HEY, EVEN IF I DO BECOME FAMOUS, I WON'T FORGET MY FRIENDS!

YA THINK YOU COULD'VE TOLD ME BEFORE I PUT THE GLOVES ON?
OH, AND COULD YOU SIGN THIS, TOO?

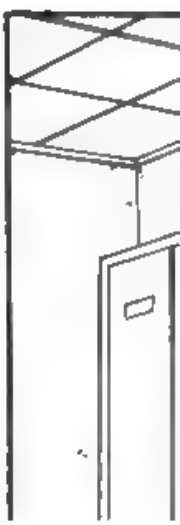
OK, NOW I'M READY!
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU BEFORE THE FIGHT!

I GOTTA TAKE MY GLOVES OFF EITHER WAY!
YOU DOIN' THIS ON PURPOSE?
HE SAYS A THUMB-PRINT WOULD BE OK, TOO.

BUT THIS TIME IT'S A SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR YOU. THEY NEED A SIGNATURE.

IT'S ALL FRESH, SO YOU SHOULD EAT IT RIGHT AWAY!
SUSHI!

LOOK, SOMEONE BROUGHT SOMETHING FOR YOU!
OK, NOW I'M REALLY SET!

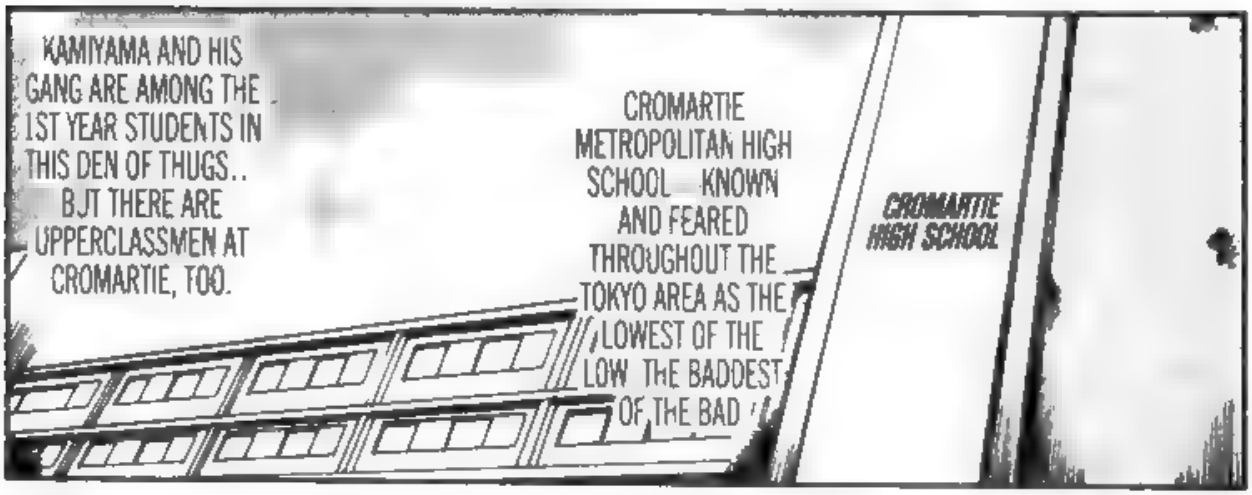


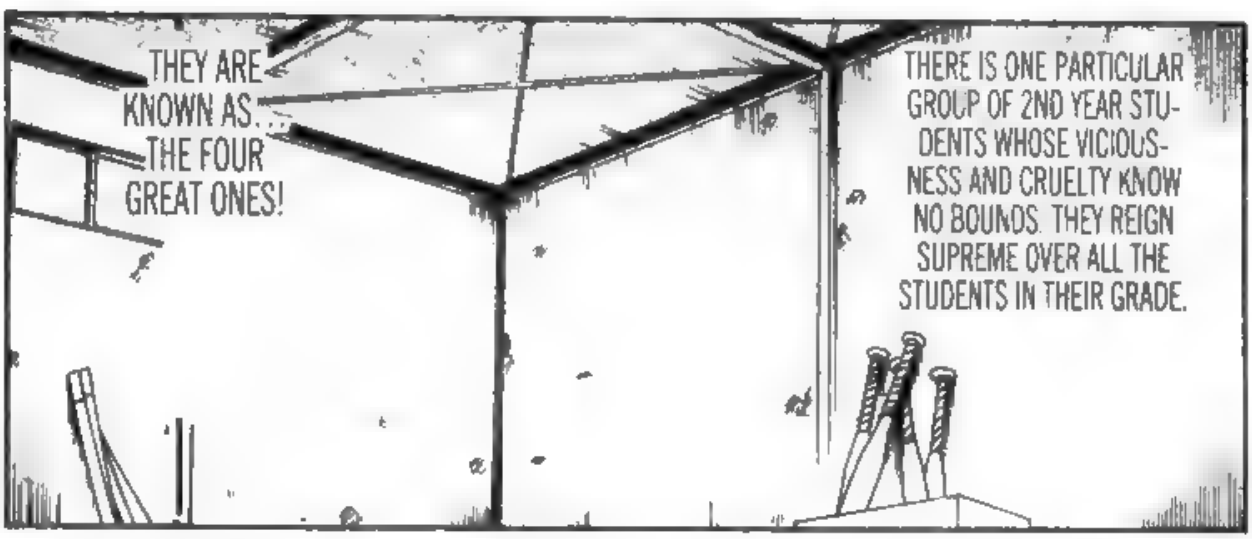
BUT HAYASHIDA-KUN! WHEN IT COMES TO SUSHI, NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN FRESHNESS! PLUS, IF YOU DON'T EAT IT, YOU'LL BE REFUSING YOUR FAN'S APPRECIATION! I KNOW IT'S RIGHT BEFORE THE FIGHT AND ALL, BUT STILL...
NO THANKS!
.....
YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO TAKE OFF THOSE GLOVES.
OK, FINE! I'LL EAT IT!
NO, WE DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT.
YOU TRYIN' TO MAKE A MONKEY OUTTA ME OR WHAT?
SORRY, BUT YOU'RE TOO LATE. WE ATE IT ALL.
ALRIGHT, LEMME HAVE SOME!
SHUT UP! I AIN'T TAKING 'EM OFF!
HAYA-SHIDA-KUN.
I'M NOT TAKING THESE GLOVES OFF AGAIN, NO MATTER WHAT!
THAT'S IT!

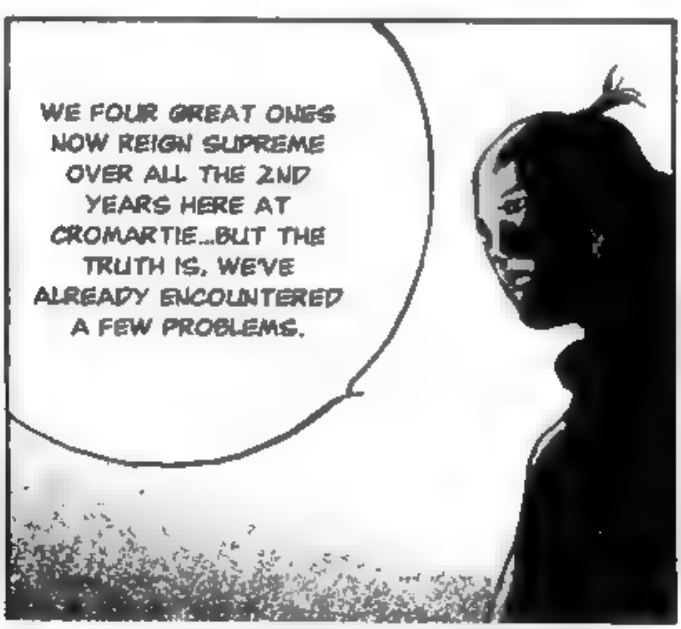
WHY AM I SO TIRED? I HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN INTO THE RING YET.
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD, HAYA-SHIDA.
WHAT?!
YOUR GLOVES ARE ON THE WRONG HANDS.
HM?
HAYA-SHIDA.
WELL, AT LEAST I FIXED MY GLOVES AND I WON'T HAVE TO BE TAKING 'EM OFF ANYMORE...
. . . . . .
SORRY TO MENTION THIS SO LATE AND ALL, BUT... YOU DIDN'T SHAKE HANDS WITH ME EARLIER. IT'S REALLY NOT THAT BIG A DEAL, I WAS JUST THINKING IT WOULDA BEEN NICE...
WAUGH! HAYASHIDA-KUN HAS FLIPPED OUT!
OH, NO! A SCUFFLE HAS BROKEN OUT BETWEEN A FIGHTER AND HIS CORNERMEN!
whoo-hoo!
yeah!

WHY SUSHI, OF ALL THINGS?!

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR: **MESSENGERS FROM HELL**


KAMIYAMA AND HIS GANG ARE AMONG THE 1ST YEAR STUDENTS IN THIS DEN OF THUGS.. BJT THERE ARE UPPERCLASSMEN AT CROMARTIE, TOO.
CROMARTIE METROPOLITAN HIGH SCHOOL... KNOWN AND FEARED THROUGHOUT THE TOKYO AREA AS THE LOWEST OF THE LOW. THE BADDEST OF THE BAD!
CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL


THEY ARE KNOWN AS... THE FOUR GREAT ONES!
THERE IS ONE PARTICULAR GROUP OF 2ND YEAR STUDENTS WHOSE VICIOUSNESS AND CRUELTY KNOW NO BOUNDS. THEY REIGN SUPREME OVER ALL THE STUDENTS IN THEIR GRADE.


WE FOUR GREAT ONES NOW REIGN SUPREME OVER ALL THE 2ND YEARS HERE AT CROMARTIE...BUT THE TRUTH IS, WE'VE ALREADY ENCOUNTERED A FEW PROBLEMS.

THERE ARE ACTUALLY FIVE FOUR GREAT ONES.
MASAHIRO NOUCHI (NO ALIAS)
JIRO TAMIYAMA (AKA "TAMI")
SHIN YURIGAOKA (AKA "YURI")
ISAO FUKUTOMI (AKA "TOMMY")
MASARU IGA (AKA "IGA-CHAN")
SIT DOWN.
WELL, FOR NOW, LET'S JUST...

FIGURING THAT OUT MAY TAKE SOME TIME... BUT THERE IS ONE THING I CAN SAY FOR SURE.
THE QUESTION IS, WHICH ONE OF US NEEDS TO GO?
WHAT DO WE DO, IGA-CHAN? WE'RE JUST GONNA LOOK SILLY IF WE HAVE FIVE FOUR GREAT ONES.
YEAH. IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM ALL OF OURS.
HUH? MINE?!
YOUR MAKEUP JUST AIN'T WORKIN' OUT.
Delinquent
BUT LOOK, CAN I ASK YOU GUYS SOMETHIN? WHETHER OR NOT MY MAKEUP FITS IN WITH THE REST OF YOURS...
N-NO! THAT WASN'T MY INTENTION AT ALL, I'M SORRY...
YOU'RE NOT TRYIN' TO MAKE YOURSELF STAND OUT, ARE YA?
HEY! DON'T JUST BLOW ME OFF!
PUTTING THAT ASIDE FOR THE MOMENT—
. . . . . .
DO WE FIT IN WITH THE REST OF THIS SCHOOL?

IN FACT, THIS STYLE HAS HELPED US ACHIEVE A TOTALLY SOLID PRESENCE HERE. IF YOU WANT PROOF OF THAT, JUST LOOK AT HOW NOBODY CAN EVEN COME NEAR US. IT'S 'CUZ THEY'RE ALL AFRAID!
I THINK YOU GUYS NEED TO REMEMBER WHY WE'RE HERE. WE CAME TOGETHER OUT OF AN HONEST DESIRE TO FUSE ROCK AND BADASSNESS. SURE, WE MAY HAVE A FEW REGRETS ABOUT OUR APPROACH, BUT IT'S TOO LATE TO START CHANGING THINGS NOW. THE MAKEUP HAS TO STAY.
I HEARD SOMETHIN' A WHILE BACK. IT'S NOT THAT PEOPLE CAN'T COME NEAR US...
YEAH?
HOLD ON. I GOT SOMETHIN' TO SAY ABOUT THAT.
. . . . . .
IF PEOPLE DON'T BOTHER YOU AT A SCHOOL AS BAD AS THIS ONE...WELL, IT'S PRETTY AMAZING!
HE DID IT AGAIN!
PUTTING THAT ASIDE FOR THE MOMENT —
THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "CAN'T" AND "DON'T WANT TO"!
WHOA, IS THIS TRUE?
IT'S THAT THEY DON'T WANT TO COME NEAR US. I DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT THAT.
IF YOU WANT PROOF, LOOK AT HOW WHENEVER THERE'S A FIGHT WITH ANOTHER SCHOOL, EVERYONE ELSE DOES THE FIGHTING FOR US. WE NEVER HAVE TO LIFT A FINGER! NOW, IF THAT ISN'T RESPECT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IS!
THE FACT IS, WE RULE OVER ALL OF THE 2ND YEARS. THERE'S NO DENYING IT.

. . . . . .
DO YOU THINK THAT MAYBE NOBODY WANTS TO LET US IN ON THE FIGHTS?
WELL?
UH, I GOT SOME-THIN' TO SAY ABOUT THAT, TOO.
LOOK, TOMMY. I KNOW THAT YOU GUYS HAVE SOME THINGS TO GET OFF YOUR CHESTS, BUT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING RIGHT NOW IS WAY OFF. EVEN IF WE DO HAVE OUR WEAKNESSES, I'M SURE THEY'RE FOR COMPLETELY DIFFERENT REASONS!
I THINK YOU'RE TOO POSITIVE.
YOU SURE ARE NEGATIVE, AREN'T YOU?
HMM. I GUESS I'D HAVE TO SAY...
THE REAL PROBLEM?
NOW, I WANT YOU GUYS TO THINK ABOUT THE REAL PROBLEM FACING US.
HOLD ON, IGA-CHAN. YOU'RE GETTING OFF TRACK. THE PROBLEM I'M TALKING ABOUT IS DECIDING WHICH OF US FIVE FOUR GREAT ONES NEEDS TO GO.
YEAH, THAT'S FOR SURE!
IT'D BE REALLY HARD FOR US TO GET JOBS WITH THIS MAKEUP!

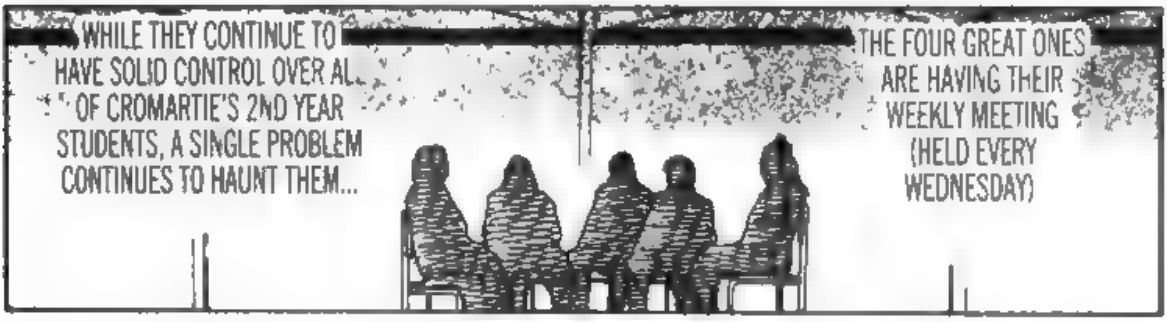
LAST WEEK I SAW A COUPLE OF UNDERCLASSMEN TOTALLY IGNORE NOUCHI WHEN HE WALKED BY 'EM. I SAY GUYS WHO GET NO RESPECT DON'T BELONG IN THE FOUR GREAT ONES!
GO AHEAD, YURI-KUN.
CAN I SAY SOME-THIN'?
B-BABY FACE? I HAVE A BABY FACE?!
HOW CAN YOU TELL THROUGH ALL THIS MAKEUP?
WELL, YOU DO HAVE KIND OF A BABY FACE.
SHUT UP! WHY WOULD THE 1ST YEARS BE DIS-RESPECTIN' ME?!
I DUNNO. I DON'T THINK YOU CAN BE A VERY HAPPY PERSON IF YOU ALWAYS GO AROUND JUDGING PEOPLE BY THEIR APPEARANCES. PERSONALLY, I'D NEVER WANNA BE LIKE THAT!
SAY WHAT YOU WILL, BUT FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE PRETTY DAMN IMPORTANT TO ME!
I WOULDN'T EXACTLY SAY BABY FACE...
ANYWAY, EVEN IF I DO, WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?
I'M NOT TOO SURE ABOUT MY MAKEUP EITHER, THOUGH...
GLASSES?
TAKE THESE GLASSES, FOR EXAMPLE.
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? APPEARANCE IS EVERYTHING!

LOOK.
GET REAL! A PAIR OF GLASSES AIN'T GONNA DO THAT!
IF I PUT THESE THINGS ON, I'LL TOTALLY LOOK LIKE SOME KINDA SMART KID!
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A NERD AT ALL...
WOW. APPEARANCE REALLY IS EVERY-THING.
BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY I CAN'T STUDY TO SAVE MY LIFE! BUT WITH THIS CLEVER RUSE, I CAN LOOK LIKE A BOY GENIUS!
HE LOOKS LIKE A NERD!
HOLY CRAP!
CUT IT OUT, WILL YA?
YOU LOOKIN' FOR A FIGHT?
I WAS ONLY TRYIN' TO EXPLAIN IT SIMPLY, YOU BASTARD!
HOLD ON, IGA-CHAN. WE'RE TRYING TO BE THE ULTIMATE FUSION OF ROCK AND BADASSNESS, AND YOU'RE SITTING HERE FOOLING AROUND WITH A PAIR OF GLASSES? SCREW THAT!
MAYBE IT'D BE BETTER IF WE HAD SOMEONE ELSE DECIDE WHO DOESN'T BELONG IN THE FOUR GREAT ONES. WE COULD HAVE A VOTE OR SOMETHING...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
IF DECIDING WHICH ONE OF US DOESN'T BELONG IS CAUSING SO MUCH TROUBLE, THEN IT'S OBVIOUS THAT WE CAN'T MAKE THE CALL ON OUR OWN.

HERE ARE THE RESULTS OF THE VOTE...
PER TAMI'S INSTRUCTIONS, A SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED AMONG THE 2ND YEARS TO DETERMINE WHO WAS MOST UNFIT TO REMAIN IN THE FOUR GREAT ONES
CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL
THE NEXT DAY
IGA-CHAN...
SURVEY
SURVEY
C-CLASS REPRESEN-TATIVE?
WHAT KIND OF SURVEY DID YOU GIVE THEM?!
YOU'VE BEEN ELECTED CLASS REPRESENTATIVE.
AH, I SEE!
PROBABLY 'CUZ YOU LOOK SO SMART WITH THOSE GLASSES.
WHY WOULD I BE MADE CLASS REPRESEN-TATIVE?

THERE ARE STILL FIVE OF THEM.

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE: **SHOCK ME**


WHILE THEY CONTINUE TO HAVE SOLID CONTROL OVER AL OF CROMARTIE'S 2ND YEAR STUDENTS, A SINGLE PROBLEM CONTINUES TO HAUNT THEM...
THE FOUR GREAT ONES ARE HAVING THEIR WEEKLY MEETING (HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY)

*On face "Late"

HECK, WHAT IF THERE WERE TEN FOUR GREAT ONES? THE COMPETITION WITHIN OUR GROUP WOULD END UP MAKING EVERYONE STRONGER!
YOU KNOW WHAT? IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THERE ARE FOUR OR FIVE OR HOWEVER MANY OF US ANYMORE!

SO WHAT KINDA GUY DO YOU WANT TO RECRUIT, IGA-CHAN? YOU PROBABLY GOT A CERTAIN IMAGE IN MIND, RIGHT?

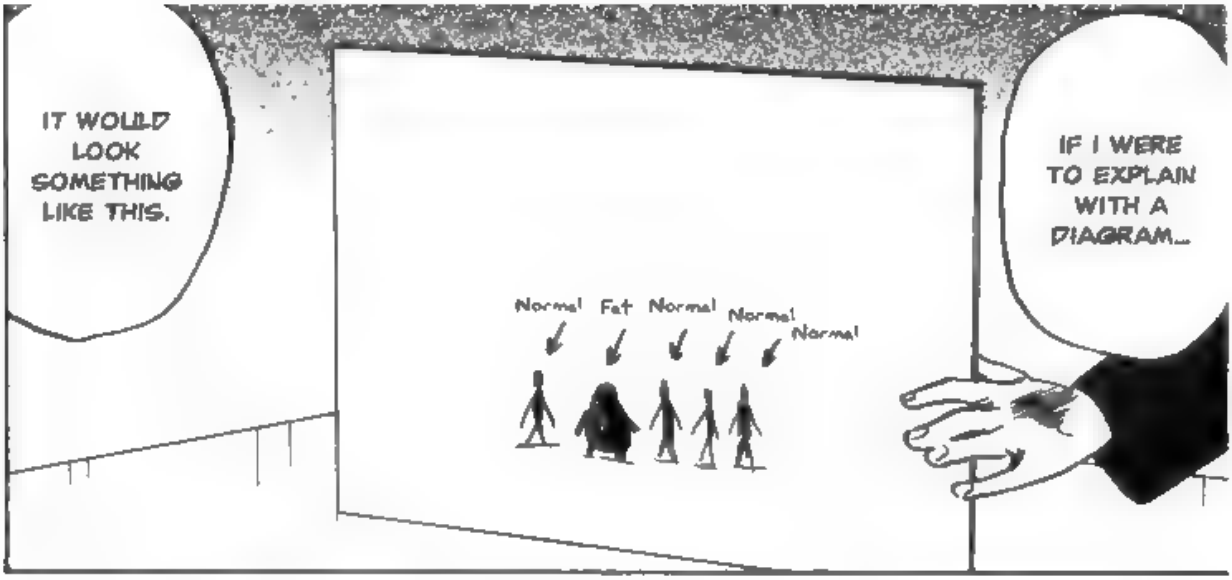
EVEN WE'D HAVE TO WATCH OUR BACKS, OR THE NEW GUYS COULD PUT IT TO US!
YEAH, I CAN SEE THAT.

UH... A FAT DUDE?
IT'D BE COOL IF WE COULD FIND A FAT DUDE TO JOIN US.

WELL, NOTHING IN PARTICULAR. BUT I WAS THINKING...

YOU COULD ALMOST SAY THAT THE FAT GUY IS ESSENTIAL TO ANY TRUE TEAM! NOW, WHILE THE RECENT TREND HAS BEEN TO TURN AWAY FROM THIS TRADITION...
BACK IN THE DAY, ALMOST EVERY GROUP OR TEAM HAD AT LEAST ONE FAT MEMBER. IT'S USUALLY THE DRUMMER IN A BAND, OR THE CATCHER ON A BASEBALL TEAM. AND THERE'S ALWAYS A FAT GUY IN THOSE FIVE-MEMBER SUPERHERO TEAMS, LIKE GATCHAMAN.

GO AHEAD.
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHIN', IGA-CHAN?
YEAH. SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
I FOR ONE WOULD LIKE TO GO **AGAINST** THE TIMES.
. . . . . .
WELL, I NOTICED MY WAIST'S BEEN GETTIN' A LITTLE FLABBY LATELY. IT MAKES ME WONDER IF I'M NOT TURNING FAT MYSELF...
WELL, HOW FAT **ARE** YOU TALKING?
LISTEN, NOUCHI. WHEN I SAY "FAT," I'M NOT TALKIN' ABOUT JUST FLABBY AROUND THE WAIST.
NO! I MEAN, THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS GETTING AT!
YOU **REALLY** WANT TO STAY IN THIS GROUP, DON'T YOU?
YOU COULD SEE HIM FROM FAR AWAY AND STILL KNOW...
WHAT I HAVE IN MIND IS A GUY WHO'S SO FAT, YOU COULD SEE HIM FROM FAR AWAY AND **STILL** KNOW THAT HE WAS ONE FAT DUDE!


IF I WERE TO EXPLAIN WITH A DIAGRAM...
Normal
Fat
Normal
Normal
Normal
IT WOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

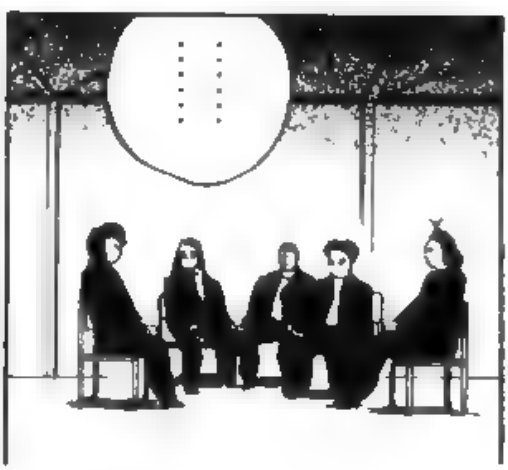
IT COULD HELP PEOPLE TELL US APART BETTER...
YEAH. IT EVEN LENDS US A CERTAIN AIR OF STRENGTH! NOT BAD.

HMM. I THINK YOU MAY BE ONTO SOMETHING. HAVING A FAT MEMBER MAY ADD SOME FLAIR AFTER ALL.

A FAT GUY WOULD PROBABLY SWEAT EASY-- AND THAT WOULD ONLY RUIN HIS MAKEUP.

THERE IS ONE MAJOR FLAW WITH HAVING A FAT GUY, THOUGH.
WHAT?!

HMM. I HADN'T CONSIDERED THAT. MAKEUP IS ONE OF OUR REQUIREMENTS...


.....

I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT THAT. ABOUT THE MAKEUP...
YES, TOMMY?
UM...
I KNOW, AND I DON'T MEAN TO TAKE US OFF TRACK. I JUST GET THE FEELING THIS MIGHT BE MY ONLY CHANCE TO BRING IT UP...
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT FAT GUYS!
MAKEUP?
HOW LONG? YOU SHOULD ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT. WE WILL WEAR MAKEUP AS LONG AS BUSINESSMEN WEAR TIES, MY FRIEND!
I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW LONG WE PLAN ON WEARING THIS STUFF.
RRNGH. FINE. WHAT ABOUT THE MAKEUP?
I MEAN, MAYBE WE COULD JUST WEAR IT AT SCHOOL, AND TAKE IT OFF WHEN WE GO HOME.
SO, WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?
I KNOW WHERE YOU'RE COMIN' FROM, BUT THERE ARE TIMES IN EVERYDAY LIFE WHEN IT CAN BE A PAIN. I THINK YOU CAN ALL AGREE WITH THAT...

NO WAY! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE MAKEUP STAYS ON 24/7. THAT IS OUR POLICY.
WHAT? YOU MEAN YOU GUYS HAVEN'T?!
Y-YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING IT ON AT HOME?!
WELL, YEAH... RIGHT?
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE ONLY IN OUR GROUP SO LONG AS YOU'RE AT SCHOOL, IS THAT IT?
BUT WE ONLY OPERATE AS A GROUP HERE AT SCHOOL. IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE THE FOUR GREAT ONES WHEN WE'RE SOMEWHERE ELSE!
THEN THAT MEANS...
DON'T YOU REMEMBER WHAT THE TEACHER SAID ON OUR LAST FIELD TRIP? "THE FIELD TRIP IS OVER ONLY WHEN YOU'VE RETURNED HOME."

AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THOUGH, THE MAKEUP STAYS ON UNLESS I'M ASLEEP OR TAKING A BATH.
EXACTLY.
WE'RE THE FOUR GREAT ONES UNTIL WE GET HOME.
IF WE DO AWAY WITH THE MAKEUP ALTOGETHER, IT'LL GO AGAINST EVERYTHING WE'VE WORKED FOR!
AND I'VE BEEN DOING IT ALL FOR THE SAKE OF CROMARTIE HIGH'S FOUR GREAT ONES!
WE ARE THE CHOSEN ONES--THE GREAT ONES--AND WE REIGN SUPREME! ARE YOU SO WILLING TO TURN YOUR BACK ON ALL WE'VE FOUGHT TO ACHIEVE?
IF NOTHING ELSE, THIS MAKEUP IS A SYMBOL OF WHO WE ARE.
UH...
WHAT DO YOU SAY, YURI?! SHALL WE JUST BELITTLE ALL THE HARDSHIPS YOU'VE HAD TO ENDURE?!
NO...

WHAT?!
ACTUALLY, I JUST JOINED YESTERDAY.

SORRY. I FORGOT TO TELL YOU.
HEY, WHAT'S THE DEAL, IGA-CHAN?

NO, I'M SAITO. IGA FORCED ME TO JOIN AFTER YURI QUIT.
YOU ARE YURI, AREN'T YOU?

SO IN OTHER WORDS, ANYONE CAN BE A MEMBER.
刻
. . . . . .
UH, I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE INTRODUCED MYSELF SOONER.

GET A CLUE.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 7

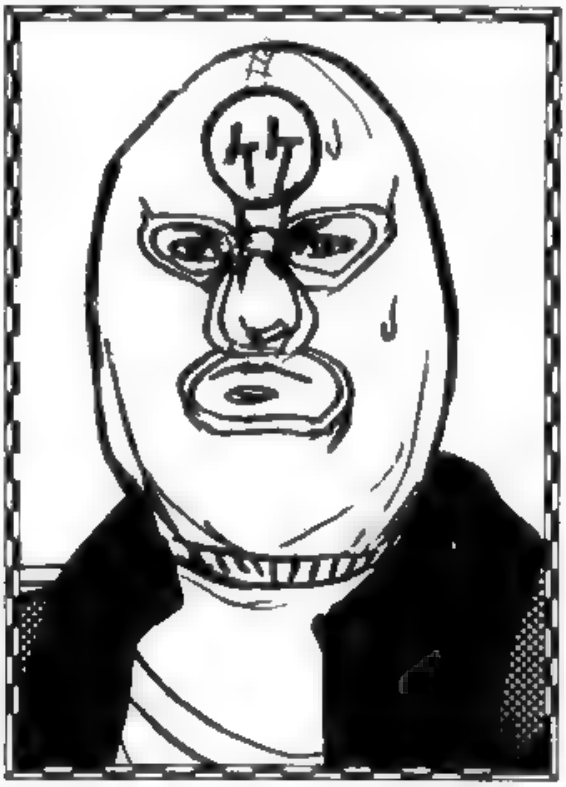
CROMARTIE'S FOUR GREAT ONES

The Four Great Ones are from Cromartie's 2nd year class. Their most endearing quality is that there are five of them. Iga acts as their leader addressing them in a selfish and domineering manner. He constantly bullies Nouchi, who stands alone because his makeup is styled after wrestling legend The Great Muta. Not only does it take a lot of time to draw the five Four Great Ones, but sometimes I'll give one of them the wrong makeup and have to redo a panel (or panels). There have been times when I'd finish drawing one of them only to cry mournfully, "Ah, that's the wrong makeup!" I think I'm done drawing these five (LOL). By the way, Iga's catchphrase is, "Appearances are everything." If that's the case, then you guys are in trouble.

POOTAN

Character from a popular television program. The name of his bespectacled sidekick is unknown. He must be very popular, seeing as how all the delinquents tune in to his show. I've received many angry and spiteful letters from readers asserting that "Pootan sucks!" However, the whole idea behind Pootan is that something that's popular can also suck, so there shouldn't be any surprise there. Pootan's catchphrase is "Pooo." He can often be found doing pottery or crushing sesame seeds for some unknown reason. What the hell is he supposed to be anyway? I hope you're looking forward to finding out more about this character—even though I probably won't say anything else about him.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 8



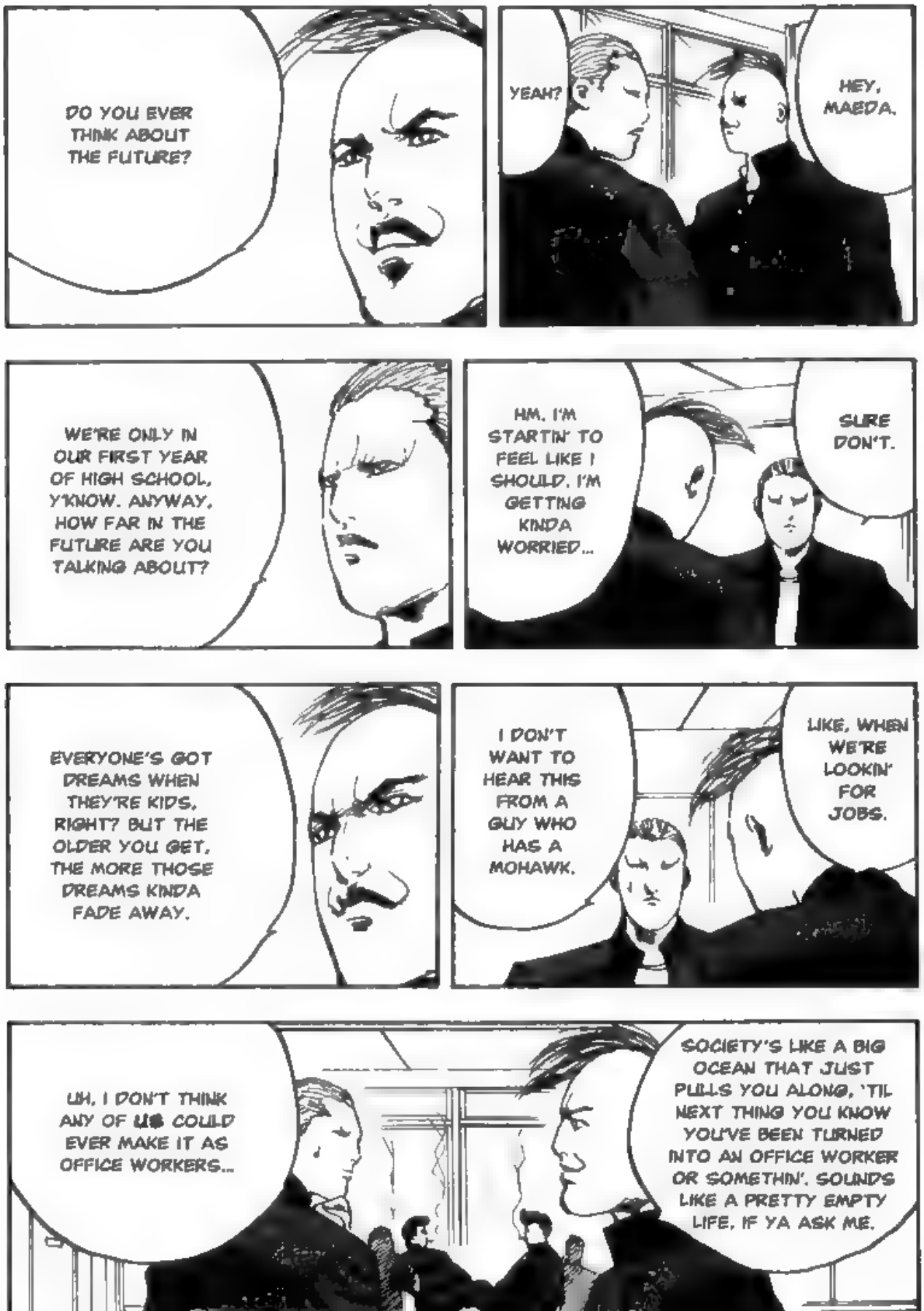
MASKED TAKENOUCHI

The masked monarch of Cromartie High. He attempted to hijack a plane full of Cromartie students bound for their class trip, but when the plan fell apart, he escaped arrest by impersonating Yutaka Takenouchi. To further confound police in their international manhunt for him, he wears a mask and keeps a low profile by attending classes at Cromartie. you'd think this would make him stand out even more! His true name is unknown, as are the whereabouts of his former accomplices. He once did time in a Mexican prison (dude, how old are you?!) Take one look at him and you'll be tempted to start cracking jokes, but take a really GOOD look at him and you might start thinking he's the most normal character of all. Something's not right here...His catchphrase is "I'm a normal high school student."

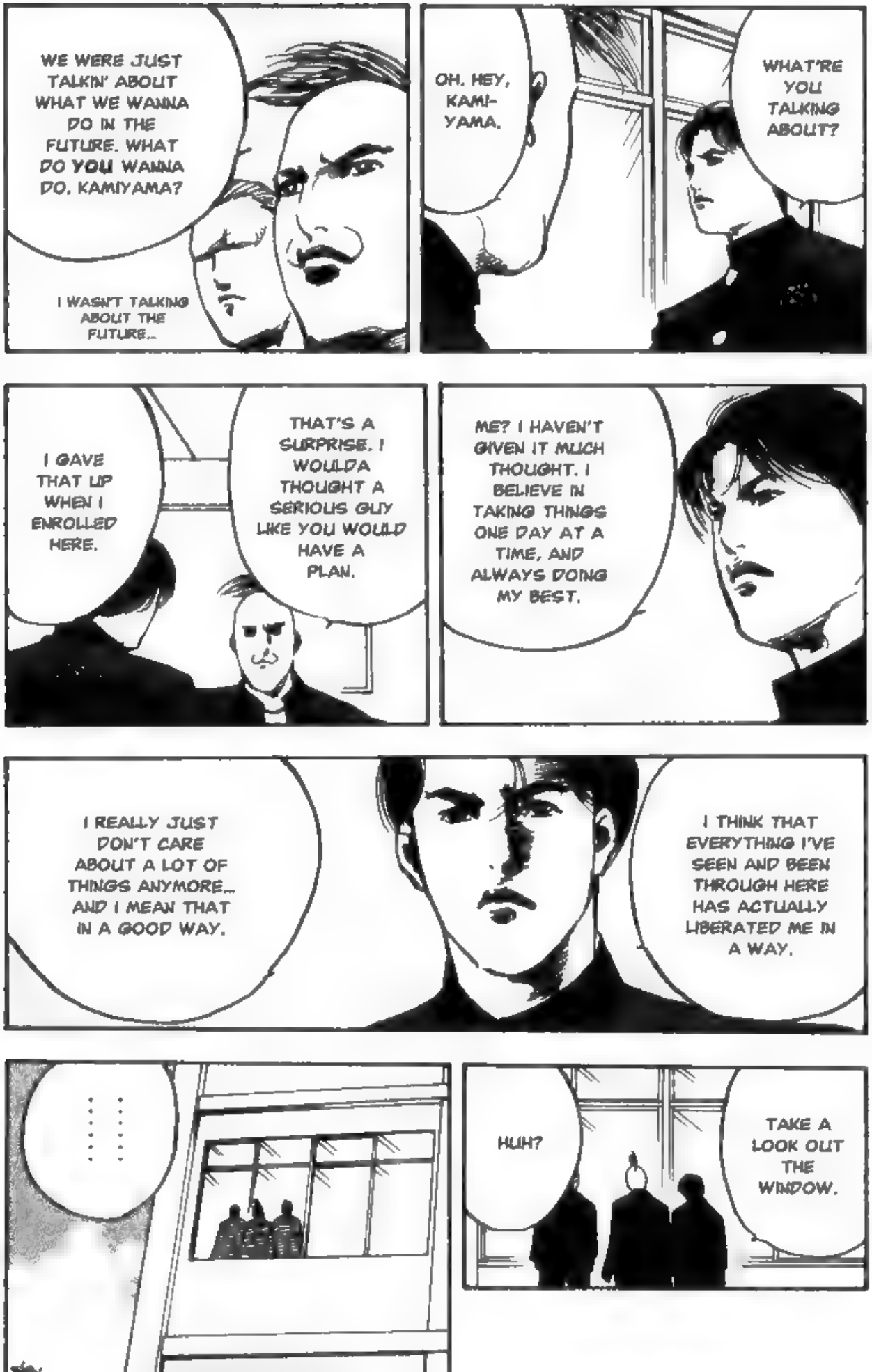
KITAO ASAKURA

Proprietor of the South Wind Café, which is located next door to Cromartie High School. As such, it has become a popular gathering spot for the students. It's thought that this is the same café they were all seen hanging out at in earlier scenes. Asakura is on good terms with the delinquent students. He gives them sound advice and even the occasional scolding. He is also so generous that he lets them get away with not paying their tabs. But perhaps the most amazing thing of all is that he has hired Freddie as part-time help. Did he actually INTERVIEW him? Asakura, you rock.

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX: **RUDIE CAN'T FAIL**


DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE?
YEAH?
HEY, MAEDA.
WE'RE ONLY IN OUR FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL, Y'KNOW. ANYWAY, HOW FAR IN THE FUTURE ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HM. I'M STARTIN' TO FEEL LIKE I SHOULD. I'M GETTING KINDA WORRIED...
SURE DON'T.
EVERYONE'S GOT DREAMS WHEN THEY'RE KIDS, RIGHT? BUT THE OLDER YOU GET, THE MORE THOSE DREAMS KINDA FADE AWAY.
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS FROM A GUY WHO HAS A MOHAWK.
LIKE, WHEN WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR JOBS.
UH, I DON'T THINK ANY OF US COULD EVER MAKE IT AS OFFICE WORKERS...
SOCIETY'S LIKE A BIG OCEAN THAT JUST PULLS YOU ALONG, 'TIL NEXT THING YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN TURNED INTO AN OFFICE WORKER OR SOMETHIN'. SOUNDS LIKE A PRETTY EMPTY LIFE, IF YA ASK ME.

I FOUND IT BURIED IN MY CLOSET. ALL MY CHILDHOOD DREAMS ARE WRITTEN DOWN IN THERE.
YOUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YEARBOOK?
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
YAMAGINA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2ND GRADE
YEARBOOK
"WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO BE A FROG. SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA."
OH... SURE, NO PROBLEM.
WOULD YA MIND READING IT?
WELL ANYHOW, NOW I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT MEANS...
EITHER WAY, YOU WERE A WEIRD KID.
MY PARENTS TOLD ME I PROBLY MEANT I WANTED TO RAISE FROGS OR SOMETHIN'.
. . . . . .
NOW HERE I AM, A BADASS AND ALL, AND I STILL FEEL THE SAME WAY! I WANNA KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE!
THE ONLY THING I CAN SAY FOR SURE IS THAT EVEN WHEN I WAS A KID, I KNEW I DIDN'T WANNA LEAD SOME ORDINARY LIFE.


WE WERE JUST TALKIN' ABOUT WHAT WE WANNA DO IN THE FUTURE. WHAT DO **YOU** WANNA DO, KAMIYAMA?
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE...
OH. HEY, KAMI-YAMA.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I GAVE THAT UP WHEN I ENROLLED HERE.
THAT'S A SURPRISE. I WOULDA THOUGHT A SERIOUS GUY LIKE YOU WOULD HAVE A PLAN.
ME? I HAVEN'T GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT. I BELIEVE IN TAKING THINGS ONE DAY AT A TIME, AND ALWAYS DOING MY BEST.
I REALLY JUST DON'T CARE ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS ANYMORE... AND I MEAN THAT IN A GOOD WAY.
I THINK THAT EVERYTHING I'VE SEEN AND BEEN THROUGH HERE HAS ACTUALLY LIBERATED ME IN A WAY.
. . . . . .
HUH?
TAKE A LOOK OUT THE WINDOW.

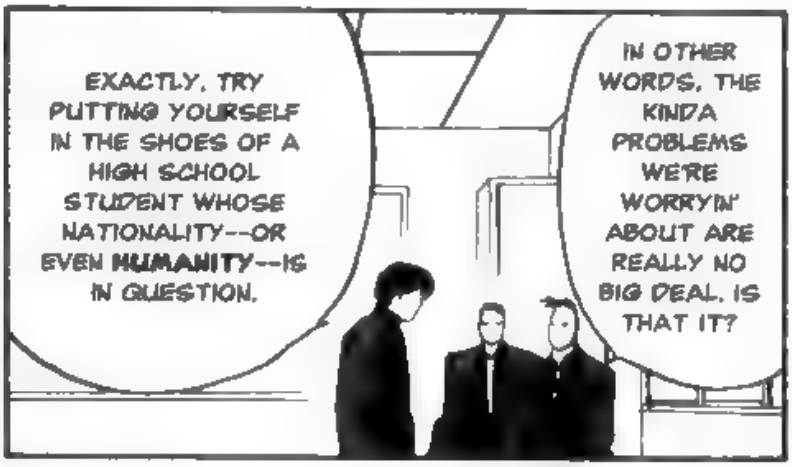
I THINK THAT'S THE LEAST OF THEIR PROBLEMS.
WELL...I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE HELL THEY'RE GONNA FIND WORK, THAT'S FOR SURE.
I'D LIKE YOU TO CONSIDER THIS QUESTION CAREFULLY. DON'T YOU THINK IT'S A HUNDRED TIMES MORE INTERESTING TO THINK ABOUT **THEIR** FUTURE PROSPECTS THAN YOUR OWN?

AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH! MY OWN PROBLEMS JUST LOOK SILLY NOW!
BUT WHEN YOU TRY TO IMAGINE WHY A **GORILLA** IS ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL, IT MAKES THOSE OTHER THINGS SEEM SO MUCH SMALLER.

YOU SEE, EVERYONE HAS ALL THESE THINGS THAT THEY WORRY ABOUT.

FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MIGHT COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW YOUR DOG IS A REAL PAIN TO TAKE CARE OF, BUT IF THE GREAT NATURE SPECIALIST MUTSUGORO-SAN WERE TO OVERHEAR, HE'D JUST SAY SOMETHING LIKE "AH, IT'S NOT ALL THAT."
PEOPLE TEND TO REGARD THINGS FROM THEIR OWN POINTS OF VIEW— BUT THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD BESIDES THEMSELVES.

YES, MAEDA-KUN?
BUT, STILL...


EXACTLY. TRY PUTTING YOURSELF IN THE SHOES OF A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHOSE NATIONALITY--OR EVEN **HUMANITY**--IS IN QUESTION.
IN OTHER WORDS, THE KINDA PROBLEMS WE'RE WORRYIN' ABOUT ARE REALLY NO BIG DEAL. IS THAT IT?

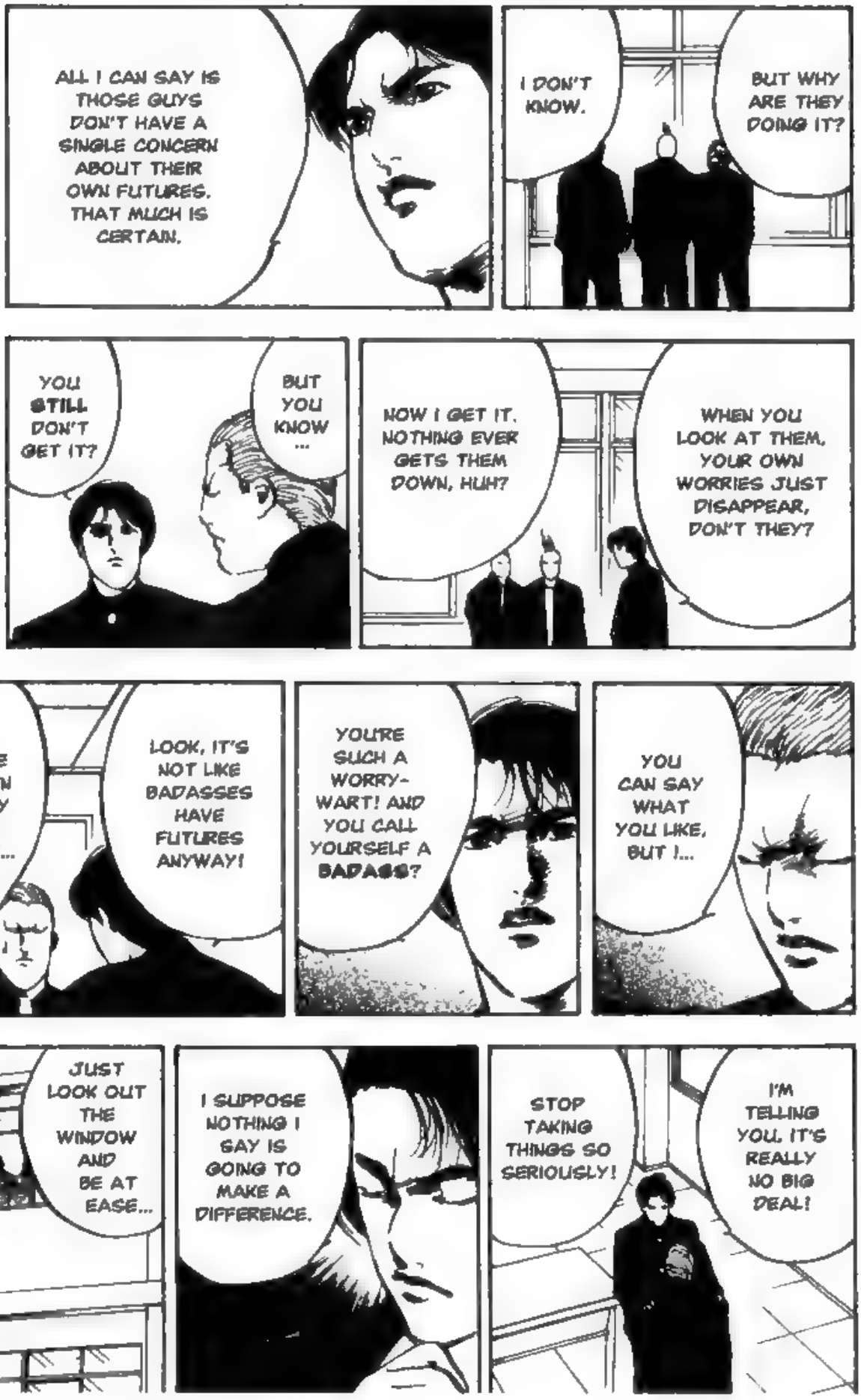
IT SEEMS I STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN THROUGH TO YOU.

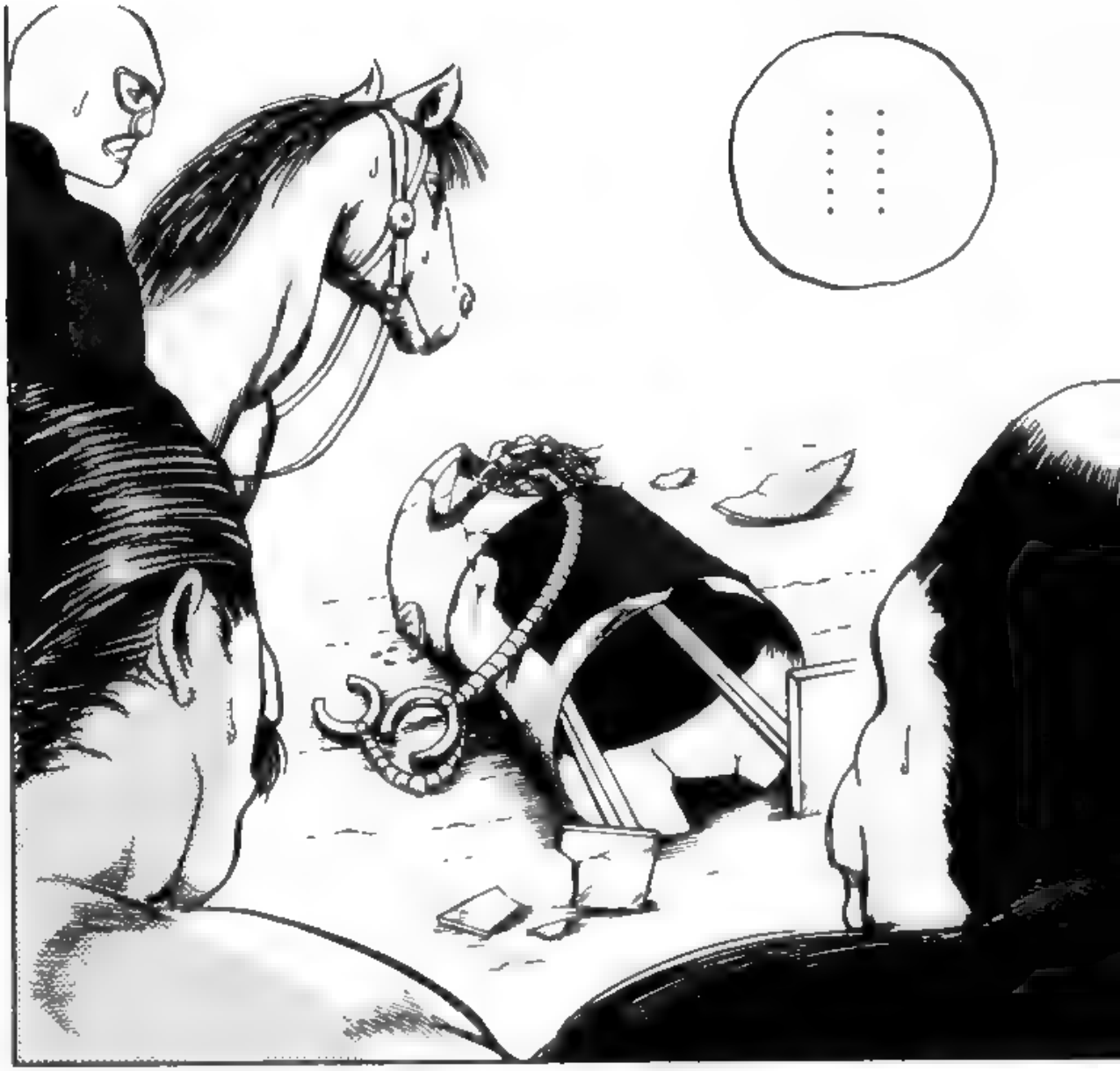
I MEAN, IF YOU'RE COMIN' TO AN IDIOT SCHOOL LIKE THIS, YOU CAN'T HELP BUT WORRY ABOUT YOUR FUTURE!
YOU WONDER IF GRADUATING FROM HERE IS EVEN GOING TO **MEAN** ANYTHING.

WHY DON'T YOU HAVE ANOTHER LOOK OUT THE WINDOW?

わっしょい
HIP-HIP-
HOORAY!
HIP-HIP-
HOORAY!

I KNOW THAT...
DON'T YOU KNOW? THEY'RE GIVING HIM A VICTORY TOSS.
WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY DOING?


ALL I CAN SAY IS THOSE GUYS DON'T HAVE A SINGLE CONCERN ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURES. THAT MUCH IS CERTAIN.
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT WHY ARE THEY DOING IT?
YOU STILL DON'T GET IT?
BUT YOU KNOW ...
NOW I GET IT. NOTHING EVER GETS THEM DOWN, HUH?
WHEN YOU LOOK AT THEM, YOUR OWN WORRIES JUST DISAPPEAR, DON'T THEY?
YOU'VE GOTTEN PRETTY MEAN LATELY...
LOOK, IT'S NOT LIKE BADASSES HAVE FUTURES ANYWAY!
YOU'RE SUCH A WORRY-WART! AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A BADASS?
YOU CAN SAY WHAT YOU LIKE, BUT !...
JUST LOOK OUT THE WINDOW AND BE AT EASE...
I SUPPOSE NOTHING I SAY IS GOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
STOP TAKING THINGS SO SERIOUSLY!
I'M TELLING YOU. IT'S REALLY NO BIG DEAL!



VOLUME 2 ★ THE END

WHAT A TWISTED TWIST OF AN ENDING.

HAYASHIDA VS. HAYASHIDA

I was just trying to get my change...
Move it. I gotta buy some soda.
Vending Machine
I sure could go for something to drink right now.
You're a rude fellow, aren't you?
Ain't my problem! Now get the hell outta my way!
beep
Maybe a cola...
k-tnk
I just want a damn cola, alright?! Now piss off!
k-tnk
Hey, where's my change?
See? I told you so!
Huh? How come my change ain't comin' out?
Now what do I do? Waaugh!

MANGA I DREW
IN FIVE MINUTES

LOVE NONA (1)

Whoa, this fortune is good enough already! There's MORE?
It's Nona, author of manga, master of comedy...
"You will realize you're actually talented at something."
and reader of fortunes..
He's a Cancer
Let's see... "Cancer: A great week is in store for you. All that you do will go well." Sweet!
What, you mean I wasn't ALREADY talented?
"And that's not all! We have some extra special news for all you Cancers."

5分で描いたマンガ

MANGA I DREW
IN FIVE MINUTES

LOVE NONA (2)

I couldn't knock down a single pin, so I got angry and left while still wearing the bowling shoes.
thunk
bkrmmm
I didn't have a choice. I went bowling, even though I didn't really want to.
Hmm. I have no idea what to write about.
When I first decided to do a manga, I had absolutely no idea what I would write about.
But nothing I did went well for me, and it just made me even more stressed out.
Pachinko
Video Games
Golf
I tried a lot of different things to relieve the stress.
I didn't blame myself for not being able to think of anything, though.
I should try writing a manga to relieve this stress!
gleam
Then I thought...
There wasn't anything I could do about it, so I sought diversion at the local batting cages ..
kink
Batting Cages
ba-kink
I see...
Inter-viewer
And these are the bowling shoes from that day.
And there you have it- the reason I started doing manga.
This is stressing me out even more. I have to find a way to blow off some steam.
But I couldn't hit a single ball. It only stressed me out even more.

MANGA I DREW IN FIVE MINUTES

THE END

Afterword:

I'M POOPED.

Eiji Nonaka

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL VOLUME TWO

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First published in Japan in 2001 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo
English translation rights for this edition arranged through Kodansha Ltd.

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ADV MANGA™ is a division of A.D. Vision, Inc.
10114 W. Sam Houston Parkway, Suite 200, Houston, Texas 77099

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ISBN 1-4139-0258-8
First printing, June 2005
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed in Canada

Cromartie High School Vol. 02

SugoROCK
In Japanese, *sugoroku* is a children's board/dice game. SugoROCK is a *sugoroku* that rocks.

Shopping Boogie
Also known as "*Kaimono* Boogie," a song by Kasagi Shizuko.

Shooting Star Press
The Chapter 27 title shares the same name as the signature move of pro wrestler Billy Kidman.

The Idle Maeda
The Chapter 28 title is parodying the name of the 1930 Japanese film *Hatamoto Taikutsu Otoko* ("The Idle Vassal").

Battles Without Honor and Humanity
The Chapter 29 title again parodies the movie title *Jingi Naki Tatakai* (1973), which was directed by Kinji Fukusaku of *Battle Royale* fame. In North America, the film was released as *The Yakuza Papers—Battles Without Honor and Humanity*.

Search for a Sidekick
The Chapter 36 title is spoofing the French movie *Cherchez L'Idole* (1963), which in Japanese was *Idol o Sagase* (lit. "Search for a Sidekick").

The Two are Idols
In Japan, the Beatles album *Help!* was also known as "The Four are Idols" (*Yonin wa Idol*).

I'm a SOUJI Man
The word *souji* in the Chapter 42 title literally means "cleanup" and is perhaps a parody of the Blues Brothers' "Soul Man."

Messengers From Hell
An alternate (Japanese) title to KISS's debut album.

Headband
Hayashida's headband originally had the kanji for *shunto*, a reference to Japan's "spring labor offensive" (a coordinated effort among unions to bargain for wages). The *shunto* began in 1952.

PG 40

Bike gang

Known in Japan as *bosozoku*, these gangs are made up of mostly adolescents, and are infamous for tearing down public streets at dangerously high speeds and/or making incredible noise with their (often illegally) modified bikes and cars—especially at late-night hours. The increasingly violent *bosozoku* are a big problem for law enforcement in some areas of Japan. In fact, in November of 1999, over 1,000 of them squared off against Hiroshima police in a riot that spanned three full days.

PG 69

UFO

This is an actual organization founded by Antonio Inoki, one of the most famous Japanese pro wrestlers of all time. In June of 1976, he fought a 15-round bout against boxing superstar Muhammad Ali that ended in a draw.

Box lunches

Box lunches, or *bento* as they are known in Japan, are served restaurant-style in flat, rectangular, lacquered boxes (or in a variety of disposable boxes as "fast food"). They are most often made up of steamed rice, fish or meat, and one or more kinds of pickled vegetables.

PG 84

Zaibatsu

The *zaibatsu* are large Japanese conglomerates whose origins go back hundreds of years. These companies gained considerable social and political power, especially in the early 1900s, and many are still around today. The supposed "big four" of the *zaibatsu* are Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sumitomo, and Yasuda (but don't tell that to The Hokuto Foundation).

PG 79

Masked Takenouchi

The character on Masked Takenouchi's forehead is the *take* in Takenouchi. Please remember that even though it is a cunning disguise, this character is not in fact Yutaka Takenouchi.

PG 100

Kanji 101

Most if not all kanji have more than one reading, depending on the word and/or combination they are used in. Readings generally fall into two basic categories, *on-yomi* and *kun-yomi*. *On-yomi* are the modern-day pronunciations derived from the original Chinese readings (dating back to when the characters were imported from China), while *kun-yomi* are native Japanese pronunciations assigned to the kanji. When it comes to names and surnames, either *on-yomi* or *kun-yomi* may be used. Some combinations, however, would simply never happen because they would sound completely unnatural—case in point, reading *wara* as *gen* to make "Hagigen." It's so silly, it makes you wonder if Hayashida is saying it on purpose.

PG 124

Nicknames

It is not uncommon for Japanese singers (or other celebrities) to truncate their own names and affix the intimate suffix *-chan*, or just play around and create nicknames for themselves.

PG 142

Gatchaman

Also known as *Battle of the Planets*, aka *G-Force*. The former version was extensively edited and rewritten for distribution in the United States, while the latter was an attempt at a more faithful recreation of the original anime. The story itself concerned five heroes in bird-themed costumes fighting the forces of evil in space.

NO. 149

Great Muta

One alias of legendary Japanese wrestler Keiji Mutoh. He also had a professional wrestling career in the US with the WCW and NWA (in which he was a one-time World Heavyweight Champion), where he wrestled under his own name. He achieved several outstanding accomplishments, like winning the World Tag-Team Championship in 2000, and was a member of the WCW's now-defunct NWO.

NO. 151

Masanori Hata aka Mutsugoro-san

A famous Japanese zoologist, author and nature-show personality. Also directed the film *Milo and Otis* (Originally *Koneko Monogatari*). He had a farm on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido (which has a reputation as Japan's great wilderness/nature preserve), where he raised all kinds of animals. He is famous for his love and knowledge of animals and nature in general. Sadly, Mr. Hata passed away several years ago.

NO. 159

Hayashida vs. Hayashida

This short is so named because Shinjiro Hayashida from *Cromartie High School* is squaring off against his counterpart from Eiji Nonaka's earlier manga *Kacho Baka Ichidai*. As the author pointed out in Volume 1 of *Cromartie*, both Hayashida and Maeda were shamelessly stolen from *Kacho Baka Ichidai* and dropped into *Cromartie*.

NO. 161

Pachinko

Pachinko is an extremely popular gambling game. In Japan, pachinko parlors are as common as arcades, and perhaps twice as noisy. A pachinko machine is best described as an upright pinball machine, often with some small video displays on it. The machine drops a stream of small metal balls, some of which just fall down to the bottom of the "playing area," while others fall into special holes that set off mini slot machine games. If you win the mini slots, you get more balls to drop. The player is rather passive, and tends only to control the rate at which the balls are dropped. Pachinko machine winnings can be exchanged for prizes at the parlor's gift shop. In many cases, one can exchange these prizes for cash at a counter or window outside the parlor (thus circumventing Japan's anti-gambling laws).

VARIOUS

-san/-kun

Most people will be familiar with the Japanese tendency to affix *-san* to the end of last (or even first) names to increase the politeness level. A good rule of thumb is that *-san* (often equated to Ms., Mr. or Mrs.) is used when addressing someone outside one's group (of friends, family, co-workers, etc.) or in some cases, superiors. Kamiyama addresses Takenouchi with *-san*, reflecting greater respect for this "underground kingpin."

Another term often used in this volume is ***-kun***. Its usage varies more than *-san*, and is often applied when addressing an (usually, but not always, male) inferior—for example, a teacher speaking to a student. It can also be used by friends or social equals when addressing each other, as in the many instances where Kamiyama addresses Hayashida and the others.

Several more of these suffixes, or "honorifics," are employed in Japanese—some more formal, some less so, and some downright derogatory! In translation, honorifics are often dropped, as certain manners of speech and proper English titles can usually take their places without sacrificing social nuances. Even in Japanese, some manga make little or no use of honorifics, while others rely on them to varying degrees. The honorifics were preserved in this translation because the story takes place in the highly-stratified environment of a Japanese high school, and touches on Japanese social intricacies that others don't.

Hilarious Hoodlums!

WINNER OF THE Kodansha Manga Award

All hell is breaking loose in the halls of the notorious Cromartie High School! For starters, Mechazawa has been sold as a kitchen appliance. Meanwhile, muscle-bound (and muscle-headed) Freddie is now in the custody of aliens. What's more, a new bully has arrived to terrorize the remaining thugs and lackeys! But it's all just another day for the underachieving—and undereducated—students of Cromartie High!

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ISBN 1-4139-0258-8